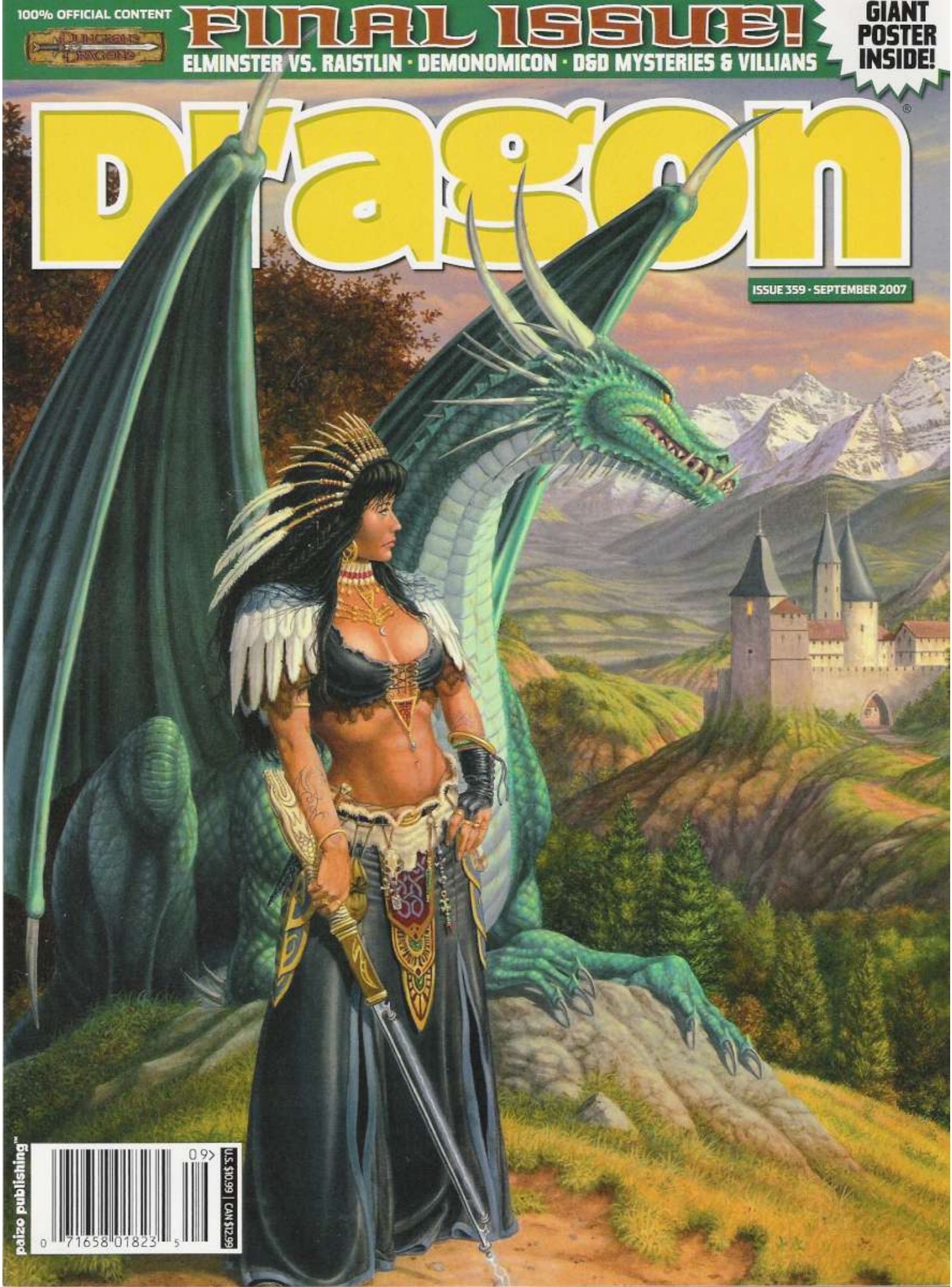
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GIANT POSTER INSIDE!
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Dragon

VOL. XXXII NUMBER 4

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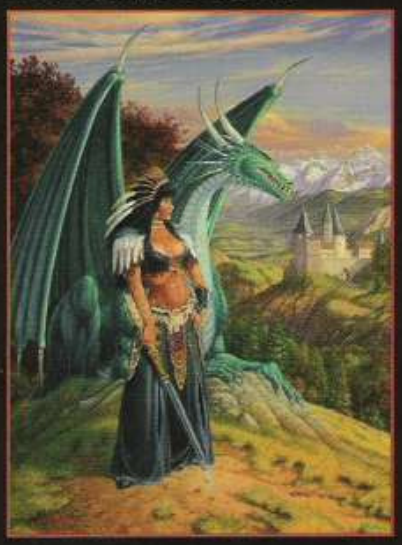
ON THE COVER

One of D&D's most popular cover artists, Larry Elmore, pays homage in our final cover to our first.



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THE LAST SESSION

When I first heard the news I felt like I'd been punched in the gut.

"Sue and I are moving to Milwaukee," Monte said. "I'm going to try to wrap up the campaign some time by the end of the summer." And with that, Monte Cook's seven-year Ptolus campaign, the first and only one I joined since coming out to Seattle to work on the D&D magazines, was headed toward an unavoidable end. In seven years I'd changed cars, apartments, and girlfriends, but Monday night at Monte's was always, always the same. I came to rely upon it, to take comfort in it once a week for seven years.

The prospect of it all coming to an end frustrated me. I was grateful for all of the good times and for being invited in the first place, and I certainly didn't begrudge my DM and his family wanting to move, but I suddenly started to worry about how it would all go down. Would there be enough time to wrap up all of the campaign's loose ends? Would we get to meet all of our favorite NPCs again before it all wound down? As the weeks slipped by I had a lot of mixed emotions. Each session brought a cool new revelation, but also some sad realizations. Each time some regular event happened it was for the last time. It all became a bit depressing.

But Monte Cook has his name on the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for a reason. The man knows how to run a great campaign, and he knows that the best way to end a long-running game is with a great final session. When the appointed hour arrived all of us played multiple characters in a huge fight involving exactly 100 miniatures. Major villains from throughout the entire campaign were on hand, and by the time the dust had settled in the final fight my character had cast *wish* and had—somehow—tied up all of his loose ends. You couldn't ask for a better end to a successful campaign.

So when the news came about that Wizards of the Coast had decided not to renew Paizo's license to publish DRAGON and DUNGEON magazine—ironically delivered about the same time Monte decided to wind down his campaign—I quickly managed to work through the mourning process and start work on putting together an incredible final issue. The legacy of DRAGON magazine has shone brightly for 31 years, and I felt the best way to go out was to take a page from my old DM: put all the miniatures on the table, close up dangling loose ends, and make the last installment the best and most exciting we absolutely could. To this end, you'll see some special features and familiar faces in this oversized final print issue

of DRAGON magazine. Special thanks to Larry Elmore, Ed Greenwood, Keith Baker, Margaret Weis, Phil Foglio, and all of the other writers, artists, cartoonists, and editors who brought us to this point. Thanks especially to Paizo's Senior Art Director Sean Glenn, a great creative partner and the designer who created the current look and logo for both magazines. Thanks also to Art Director Sarah Robinson, who has handled the magazine's interior for more than a year with a great attitude and a strong visual flair. It wouldn't have been possible without you.

None of this would have been possible, I might add, if not for the tireless work of DRAGON'S editorial and art staff. My name might appear at the top of the masthead, but these folks did most of the hard work it took to get this magazine to you each and every month. I'd like to give them a chance to say their final goodbyes. Take it away, guys.

JASON BULMAHN (MANAGING EDITOR)

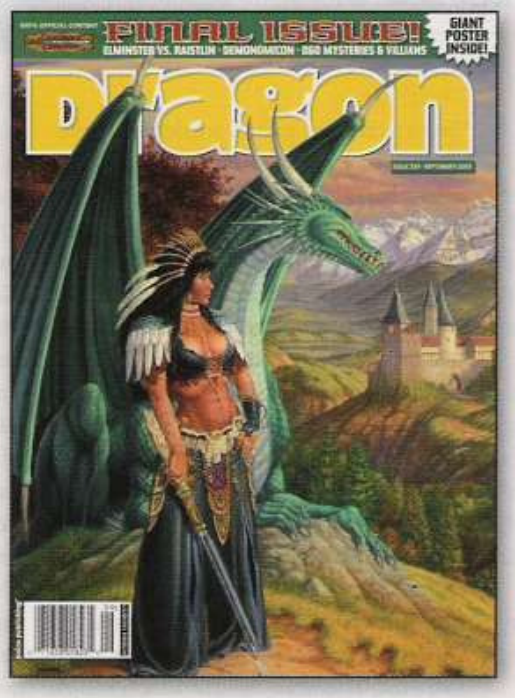
When I started working for Paizo, nearly three years ago, I never thought I would be writing these words. Here we are, at the last print issue of DRAGON. This magazine has meant a lot to me over the years, from when I first started playing twenty years ago, through today, one of my last as its Managing Editor.

In spite of the danger of making this sound like an award acceptance speech, I would like to take this moment to thank a few folks who were vital in getting me into the gaming industry. I would like to thank my mom, who gave me the money to buy my first D&D product, despite her reservations. I would like to thank my dad, who dropped me off at my first Gen Con and who waited around that evening to pick me up. Thanks, of course, go out to Erik Mona, who not only helped me get involved with the RPGA but who also offered me a job here at Paizo. I would also like to

thank F. Wesley Schneider and Mike McArtor, my partners in crime, helping to wrangle the *Dragon* every month, and doing a damn fine job of it. Finally, I would like to thank Nicole, who has put up with all my insane hours working on freelance projects, late nights spent at the office, and for following me across the country so that I could pursue my dream of working on *Dragon* magazine.

Mike McArtor (Associate Editor)

So, Gentle Reader, at last we meet again for the first time for the last time. For nearly four years now (44 issues, can you believe it?) I've lived the dream I barely dared to hope for as a lad, but this is the first time I've ever spoken directly to you. And you know what? This is harder than it looks!



For more than half those months I've ruled over Bazaar of the Bizarre, Class Acts, and fiction with an iron fist. Through those departments I put my mark on D&D, for better or worse, and over the course of those all-too-few months I helped others do the same. To Amber, David, Hal, John, Mark, Richard, Troy, our wonderful fiction writers, and every other contributor who made *Dragon* such a pleasure to work on: thank you.

I'd also love to thank ever one who helped me get here today, but that's quite a long list. I will say thanks, though, to my parents and my best friend, Gigz, and to Lisa and Matt (for hiring me), Erik (for keeping me around), Wes (for putting up with me), and Jason (for the Irish Carbombs).

F. Wesley Schneider (Associate Editor)

The end of an era—as that is truly what this is—brings with it a lot of questions and even more emotion. Unfortunately, far more than 200-some words on page 9 can contain. Seems like that's always the case...

So, rather than goodbye, let me say thank you. Thank you to thousands of loyal, enthusiastic, sometimes weird, often opinionated, but always passionate readers. Thanks to Cam Banks, Eric Cagle, Jacob Frazier, Andrew Hou, Tim Hitchcock, Kyle Hunter, Tito Leati, Nick Logue, Rich Pett, Sean K Reynolds, Amber Scott, Greg Vaughn, Johnathan Richards, Owen Stephens, Todd Stewart, and dozens more of the most imaginative authors and artists anyone could ever have the complete privilege of working with. Thanks to Sue and Monte Cook, Peter Adkison, Wolfgang Baur, Jim Lowder, China Miéville, ever-charming Margaret Weis, inimitable Ed Greenwood, and, of course, Gary Gygax, for weathering innumerable questions, always being so willing to help, and providing countless pages of the best writing *Dragon* has or will ever publish. Also, thank you to Shelly Baur, Mike Fiegel, Will Christensen, and dozens of the most devoted game producers in the world for performing the Herculean task of filling First Watch month after month. And finally, thanks to Jason Bulmahn, Sean Glenn, James Jacobs, Mike McArtor, Erik Mona, Sarah Robinson, and Matt Sernett—friends and teachers each—for making the past four years and 44 issues both a pleasure and an honor.

Here's to the next thing, may it be even better than the last.

So there you have it. In 359 issues of *Dragon* we've lived on the wild frontier of *Dungeons & Dragons*. In a few months Wizards of the Coast will unveil a new online version of *Dragon* and *Dungeon* as part of something they're calling the "Digital Initiative." We at Paizo have our own plans and a brand new Adventure Path in the pages of a new monthly product, *Pathfinder*, which should be available at local game shops, bookstores, and **paizo.com** by the time you read this. We've also got monthly adventure modules, classic science fiction and fantasy novels, and a whole line of great products aimed directly at our current customers, but those are different stories, to be told in different pages.

My whole life I've only ever wanted one job: This one. It's been an honor to be your Editor-in-Chief and Publisher. Together we've had one hell of a campaign.

Erik

Erik Mona
Editor-in-Chief
erikm@paizo.com

PS: Readers with subscription credit extending beyond *Dragon* #359 or *Dungeon* #150 should visit **paizo.com/transition** to learn more about their options. Readers without access to email should contact our customer service department at Customer Service, Paizo Publishing, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201, Bellevue, WA 98005.

SCALE MAIL

THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME

Well, I really never thought I'd ever write this Letter to the Editor. The last time I wrote for *Dragon* or *Dungeon* was when I announced my resignation after ten years as Art Director of these publications. That was in January, 2000.

Since then, the gaming world has grown and changed, largely due to the advances of online gaming. Ahhh, but there was a time (and isn't that what you're really looking for, dear reader?) when I worked daily with most of the greatest illustrators in fantasy.

When Brom had two names (Jerry Brom—I published one of his early portfolio pieces as a *Dragon* cover).

When Jeff Easley proved that he was creating fantasy illustration since he crawled out of his crib as a toddler?

When Keith Parkinson showed that attention to detail was paramount in depicting fantasy.

When Larry Elmore painted light, and used it to highlight the female form (with respect for Betty!).

And there are so many: Frazetta, Robin Wood, Stephen Daniele, Clyde Caldwell, Fred Fields, Robh, Aaron Williams, John Kovalic, and more, from dark fantasy to humor, that I need to recognize for their contributions. We had a great time; we were young, creative; and we had a perfect forum. We worked for a great company, TSR, and were acquired by Wizards of the Coast, later Hasbro, and finally, Paizo. But through all of the changes, one thing remained true: We were faithful in how we depicted our fantasy worlds. Watching the Lord of the Rings trilogy, you can see so many of these great paintings used as inspiration for key shots. What a credit to the talents of these artists! And a credit to the filmmakers for doing their homework and returning to the masters!

Dragon and *Dungeon* will hold their place among the last of the great illustrated magazines in American publishing. We had an illustration staff long after most publishers had moved on to freelance 35mm photography. But, such is the nature of fantasy publishing: we rely on the imagination of our artists and writers.

Best of luck, Paizo, with your new formats! The style might change but the song remains the same!

And for our readers, thanks for growing with us. The worlds of fantasy roleplaying will keep evolving and Paizo will deliver them in the style you require!

Larry Smith
Art Director, TSR Periodicals, 1990–2000

OUR OLDEST YOUNGEST READER

Dragon has been like the party rogue. You disabled traps and opened locks for us in Sage Advice. You gave plenty of humorous comments in the comics. You added many allies in Winning Races and Gaining Prestige. You gave us many useful magic items that boosted our abilities in Class Acts and Bazaar of the Bizarre. You made every single Knowledge check in Monster Ecologies. You made plenty of enemies in the Demonomicon and Creature Catalog.

But what happens when the rogue dies?

I write this letter today because it's my last chance to get a letter in. I am only into my first subscription, and I am 11 years old. I started playing at 8. I learned of *Dragon* at only 9, and subscribed just last August.

All I can say is: Could you do a long Scale Mail, like you used to? Just this once? Please?

Nikolai G. J. Geier
Via Email

TALISMAN CONTEST

DRAGON TALK

The classic quest for the crown returns this month with the new fourth edition of *Talisman*. This month, Black Industries and Paizo Publishing want to give you a chance to win your very own copy of the cult classic board game. All you have to do to enter is send an e-mail to **contest@paizo.com** with your name, address, and the subject line "Talisman Contest" by October 1st. We'll choose three entries and announce all the winners on **paizo.com** in November. So just send in an e-mail and claim a talisman of your very own!

Sure. The extra page of letters is just for you, Nikolai!

So Long

I started buying Dragon a few years ago, with #260, and with last month's issue (#356) I learned how much I relied on the routine of buying it! For all that time the magazine was full of interesting stuff, although the staff might have changed. I thought I'd speak my peace since I have the chance! Goodbye, old friends! (Never stop playing!)

Nathan Howe
Via Email

Ioun Stone of Farewell

I have been an avid player of D&D for about 15 years now and during that time I bought every issue of Dragon I could get my grubby little hands on. I first leaned to play D&D from, of all people, my girlfriend (something that made most of the other gamers in my school drool with envy). Over the years this magazine has always been here to provide me with the type of D&D-related info I was looking for, be it new classes, new magic items, fiction, or adventure ideas. Even in the switch from AD&D to third edition and then from third edition to 3.5, Dragon has continued to produce the quality gaming extras that I was looking for in a monthly publication. These are some of the darkest days for us gamers. Companies seem to be either doing wonderfully or are just on the brink of oblivion. I play a large number of RPGs at this point, such as the games of Palladium and White Wolf, but D&D has always been the favorite. With the loss of Dragon magazine I am left wondering what this means for the rest of the gaming industry. Without quality publications such as yours I feel that gamers everywhere are being dealt a very bad hand. So if I must, I will bid you a fond farewell and hope that someday Wizards of the Coast will bring you back.

As a last mention I have always loved your articles on magic items and ecologies. I would really love to see an article on ioun stones. They have been a very iconic item in D&D and in the past have had a large variety of types available but in third edition and 3.5 they have only a base few available. I don't know if this will get a spot in the magazine's final few issues or not but an article about the iconic magic items of D&D and their origins and new options would make me one happy devoted fan.

Jaye Baker
via email

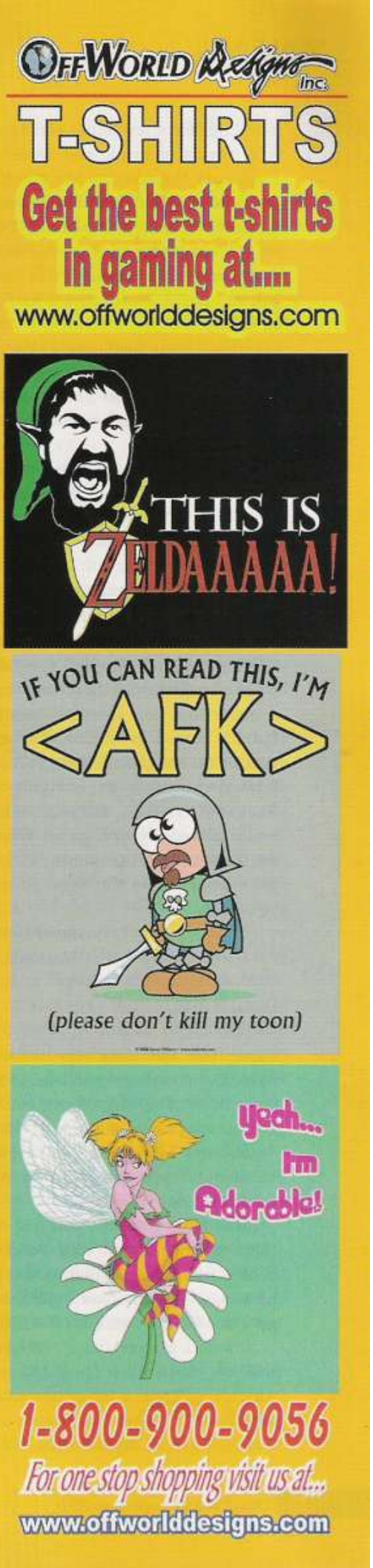
I'm sorry we never found the room to run that ioun stone article, Jaye, but if you're looking for some inspiration I strongly recommend Jack Vance's Rhialto the Marvelous, *from whence they originally came. The book is currently available in the must-have* Tales of the Dying Earth *omnibus available from Orb Books.*

Crossing the Rubicon

I won't bore you with numbers; suffice to say my first letter to Dragon is many, many years in the writing. I am simply amazed that my old friends Dragon and Dungeon, my snuggle-up-and-read companions, my inspiration or my guide when inspiration fails, my monthly links to gamers everywhere, will be moving online. What a radical change!

I was unsure of the fate of D&D when Wizards of the Coast took the helm, but I have been very happy with the changes WotC wrought. And similarly, when Paizo inherited Dragon and Dungeon, I was very pleasantly surprised with the direction. You at Paizo should be proud of the products you have published over the past several years; they have regularly been among the magazines' best issues.

I am not sure whether I will follow Dragon and Dungeon forever into the online realm. One of the joys of the monthly magazines was the opportunity to disconnect from my



computer for a few hours and vanish into worlds of magic and monsters. I am sure the content will translate well into HTML files and PDF files, or whatever technology is planned. I will try it. I may come to enjoy it. But my many years of fond memories are of ink and paper. Pixels have a hard act to follow.

In these your final days, I raise my sword in salute, DRAGON magazine! You have served me and countless others faithfully and well. Honor to THE DRAGON!

Eric Weberg
Rubicon, WI

CRITICAL HIT!

I'm an avid reader and love your work. When I read last issue that you guys were going to stop publishing I felt like I got struck through the heart with a longsword. I have only been a subscriber for fourteen months, but it's been a great ride. The content of the magazines was great and I loved the Class Acts sections and EBERRON campain material, which really helped my own game. Thanks for the wonderful 14 months and the great advice from the Sage. I'll miss you guys.

Samuel Deaton
Marshall, TX

ONWARD AND UPWARD

Damn, that was some very bad news indeed: you ceasing to publish DRAGON (and DUNGEON), one of my all-time favorite magazines (along with Games Workshop's *White Dwarf*), but I guess we shouldn't be surprised by this move from Wizards of the Coast.

Ideally, you guys at Paizo will continue to prosper and your *Pathfinder* book will be as fine a publication as you have made DRAGON (you really should get some kind of award for that feat).

Now as I understand it, *Pathfinder* will be much like DUNGEON was, which leaves me, a long-time reader of DRAGON, but not DUNGEON, with a HUGE gap in my monthly drug. I hope that you also will find the time and money to produce a product much like DRAGON.

There has always been something in DRAGON that could be used in any campaign or setting. In recent issues, I have seen a couple of Scale Mails that complained about the fact that there often wasn't anything they could use in certain issues. I am a big fan of DRAGONLANCE (the Chronicles novels started me in this hobby) and have always (yes indeed, I mean always) been able to glean something from whatever article I have read that could be used in a DRAGONLANCE setting with some kind of modification, so I don't quite understand this view, but I guess it all boils down to people not having (or giving themselves) the time to adapt the information to their own campaign.

As a final note, I have to applaud you with the very fine job you have done with DRAGON.

So long Paizo, it has been a very good time indeed and I hope to read something in paper form (and not just some Adventure Path) from you again soon.

Peter Sejten
Denmark

Thanks for the kind words, Peter. Thanks especially for telling us we deserve an award for what we've done with the magazines. We agree, of course, and I'm pleased to report that both DRAGON *and* DUNGEON *magazines scored the coveted Origins Award this year. The Origins Award is the most prestigious award in gaming, and speaking personally I've wanted one ever since I heard they existed. We were nominated several times in the last five years, and* DRAGON *even won one before I joined the staff. But this year, in large part due to the voting support of* DRAGON*'s legions of loyal readers, we managed to win in two categories! A fitting end to a fine magazine.*

Pathfinder *might be focused on the Adventure Path, but we have lots of plans beyond even* Pathfinder*, and we intend to publish a large amount of material of interest to all readers of* DRAGON *and* DUNGEON*, including stand-alone modules, classic science fiction and fantasy novels, and more. Drop by our message-boards at* **paizo.com** *to learn more about our exciting plans for the future.*

We're not giving up on print, not by a long shot. In fact, we plan to stick around for a long, long time.

Here's hoping you'll be right there with us. —Erik Mona

GAMEMASTERY GIVEAWAY WRAP-UP

DRAGON TALK

The GameMastery Giveaway has ended! The following lucky winners nabbed sets of GameMastery gear, including a signed copy of *Do: Hollow's Last Hope*, *D1: Crown of the Kobold King*, the Critical Hit Deck, Combat Pad, flip-mats, item cards, and more! Even if you didn't win, you can pick up all the GameMastery gear you want at **paizo.com.**

Name	From
Jon Burstein	Lexington, Massachusetts
Brian Dunnell	Arlington, Virginia
Rob Lightner	Seattle, Washington
Michael McLaughlin	El Paso, Texas
Duncan Prettyman	Newark, Delaware
Jason T. Roeder	Moberly, Missouri
Kristian Serrano	Gainesville, Florida
William D. Sharpe III	Marlinton, West Virginia
Robert B. Watson	Bryan, Texas
Susan Wells	Wellington, New Zealand

Thanks to the hundreds of participants who made this contest our biggest ever!

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Readers,

Recently, Wizards of the Coast decided not to renew Paizo Publishing's license to create and distribute *Dragon* and *Dungeon* magazines. Both magazines will cease publication following the release of their September issues, which ship to subscribers and newsstands in August. The final issues of the magazines will be *Dungeon* #150 and *Dragon* #359.

Wizards of the Coast will be moving the kind of content currently found in the magazines to an online model. Both companies remain on good terms and continue to discuss future opportunities for publishing partnerships. As more information becomes available on Wizards of the Coast's plans for the *Dragon* and *Dungeon* brands, we'll keep you updated in the remaining issues of the magazines.

Paizo will continue to create products compatible with the world's most popular roleplaying game. In addition to our existing line of GameMastery accessories like Item Cards and the new Critical Hit Deck, this summer will see the debut of two exciting RPG lines from the same creative minds that have brought you the magazines these last five years. In June, Paizo kicks off its new GameMastery Modules line, featuring monthly 32-page adventures from top designers like Nicholas Logue, Richard Pett, Wolfgang Baur, and Jason Bulmahn! Each lavishly illustrated full-color GameMastery Module is designed to be used easily in a wide variety of campaigns, and will meet or exceed the expectations you've come to expect from Paizo Publishing.

August sees the debut of *Pathfinder*, a new monthly 96-page, perfect-bound, OGL-compatible full-color softcover Adventure Path book printed on high-quality paper. Over the last several months, the same editors who bring you *Dragon* and *Dungeon* have been developing the next evolution in RPG campaigns, and we hope you'll take some time to look at what we have to offer. *Pathfinder* will be sold at hobby retail stores, bookstores, and online at paizo.com, and—though it's a book, not a magazine—we'll be offering a subscription service for gamers eager to add a vorpal edge to their campaigns. In fact, you can subscribe to *Pathfinder* right now and receive a free bonus *Player's Guide* to the first *Pathfinder* Adventure Path: Rise of the Runelords.

Speaking of subscriptions, the discontinuation of *Dragon* and *Dungeon* will leave many of our valued subscribers with excess subscription credit. Paizo has set up a special transition web page at **paizo.com/transition** that offers multiple options to these subscribers. A brief summary of these options follows:

***Pathfinder*:** Current subscribers can transfer their existing post-September subscription credit to monthly volumes of *Pathfinder* at a generous discount as an easy way to try out the new publication. This is your opportunity to get in on the ground floor of this major new series, and we'd certainly love the chance to keep delivering exciting gaming content to you on a monthly basis.

***Dragon* and *Dungeon* Back Issues:** Subscribers can choose to receive select back issues on a one-for-one basis based on remaining subscription credit. This is a great way to fill holes in your collection.

Paizo.com Store Credit: Paizo.com is the Internet's leading online hobby store, with more than 22,000 gaming products from hundreds of publishers. Subscribers can swap their excess subscription credit for store credit on our website at a generous 120% exchange rate.

Refund: If none of the above options appeal to you, Paizo will issue you a refund check for your remaining subscription credit. (Refund checks will be issued starting October, 2007, and may take several weeks to arrive.)

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Dragon and *Dungeon* have been the backbone of Paizo Publishing since we spun off from Wizards of the Coast's periodicals department in 2002, and both magazines have been an integral part of the RPG publishing world for decades. Bringing the magazines to you every month has been a true honor, and we in the Paizo family look forward to the continuing honor of serving your gaming needs for years and years to come.

Sincerely,

Erik

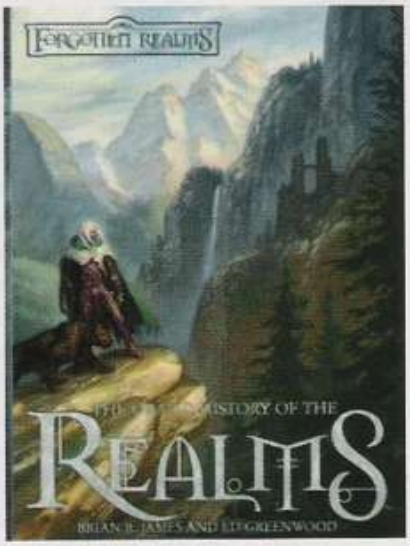
Erik Mona
Publisher

NEW RELEASES

What would D&D be with out the mad archmage, the cruel blackguard, or the rampaging dragon? *Exemplars of Evil* takes this question to its core, focusing on creating and playing memorable villains. Designer Robert J. Schwalb says *Exemplars of Evil* "lays out step-by-step how you should build your villain." Along with details on how to create memorable villains, nefarious details, deadly lairs, and sinister adventure hooks, there are also supporting mechanics like villain feats, alternate class features, and pregenerated villains ranging from CR 5 to 20. *Exemplars of Evil* also ties into *Elder Evils*, releasing later this year.

Continuing the adventure that began in *Barrow of the Forgotten King* and *Sinister Spire*, adventurers must next face the serpentine horrors lurking in the *Fortress of the Yaun-ti*. An adventure for 6th through 8th level, *Fortress of the Yaun-ti* can directly follow the previous adventures in the series, or be run as a standalone adventure.

Also new this month is *Dungeon Tiles V: Lost Caverns of the Underdark*, focusing on natural cavern features like lava pools, cliffs, winding passages, underground rivers, green slime, and more. Designer James Wyatt says it uses "all small tiles, so it's easier to shape them the way you want to."



For years, FORGOTTEN REALMS archivist Brian R. James has catalogued vast and disparate numbers, dates, and references into his Chronology of the FORGOTTEN REALMS website. Teaming up with other FORGOTTEN REALMS loremasters, James and Ed Greenwood have compiled the ultimate, authoritative history of Toril. Culled from all FORGOTTEN REALMS sources from first edition on, *A Grand History of the Realms* resolves contradictions and compiles a definitive timeline, along with extensive cross-references, anecdotes, and essays from Elminster to finally present the Realms' full story.

GAMEMASTERY ADVENTURES

Out of adventures to run? Never fear, Paizo Publishing's GameMastery Modules are here! Since June, Paizo has published one full-color 32-page adventure a month, and we aren't stopping anytime soon! September sees the release of Steve Greer's *U1: Gallery of Evil*, October brings Michael Kortes's *J1: Entombed with the Pharoahs*, Nick Logue (with Tim Hitchcock) returns to the lineup in November with *E1: Carnival of Tears*, and Anson Caralya's *J2: Guardians of Dragonfall* closes out the year in December.

And if you look forward to something coming in the mail every month, you can set up a month-to-month subscription for the modules at **paizo.com**. You can even set up a combined subscription with *Pathfinder* to receive them both at the same time!

reported by Shelly Baur, William Christensen, Mike L. Fiegel, and Mike McArtor

A LEGEND RETURNS

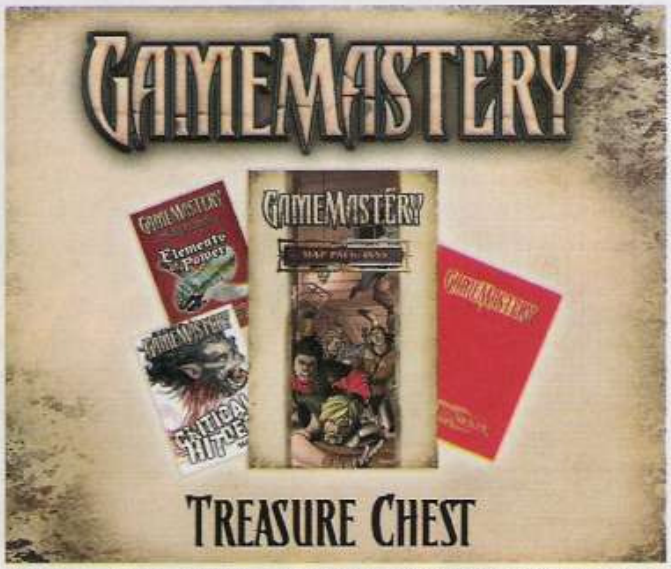
Games Workshop's Black Industries has announced the release of the fourth edition of their popular *Talisman* game, newly updated after a thirteen-year hiatus. First released in 1983 and last updated in 1994, the game offers a fantasy board game experience for up to six people, as the characters they control compete for the right to wear the Crown of Command.

"This is the best edition of Talisman we have ever produced," said Marc Gascoigne, Head of Black Industries. "It's the return of a genuine classic fantasy game, and I'm proud to be announcing its comeback. I know fans old and new will love this edition."

While the game maintains much of what made it a classic, the fourth edition features new artwork by Ralph Horsley and Jeremy McHugh, and all-new "speedy play rules" written by the legendary Rick Priestley (of *Warhammer* fame).

For more information on the new edition of *Talisman*, visit **blackindustries.com**.

ULTIMATE GM'S KIT



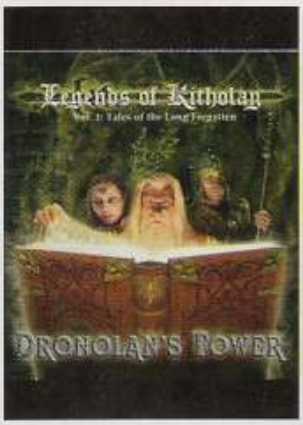
This November, Paizo Publishing (**paizo.com**) is going to give game masters every GameMastery product they might need to run an adventure—including the adventure! Featuring copies of the Campaign Workbook, Critical Hit Deck, Item Cards: Elements of Power, Flip-Mat: Woodlands, and Map Pack: Inns—the GameMastery Treasure Chest comes in a storage box as sturdy as it is handy. Also included is a brand new GameMastery Module, written by Greg A. Vaughan, featuring a scavenger hunt through a haunted forest, complicated by a rival party of adventurers who are up to no good. Specifically designed to be included in this set, the adventure features handy sidebars to help game masters use the accompanying tools. The GameMastery Treasure Chest is the perfect gift for novice and experienced game masters alike.

MYTHIC MONSTERS

Ever wanted to stare down a life-size dragon? All you have to do is check out this year's *Mythic Creatures* exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History (**amnh.org**), in New York, NY.

"Mythic Creatures will feature preserved specimens from the Museum's collections and even fossils of prehistoric animals to investigate how they could have, through misidentification, speculation, and imagination, inspired the development of some legendary creatures," said Michael Walker of the museum.

Among other things, the exhibit displays a model of a 17-foot dragon with a 19-foot wingspan; sea creatures including the kraken, mermaids, and other sea monsters; various unicorns, griffins, sphinxes; and even a chupacabra. The exhibit is on now, and ends in early January of next year.



MUSIC TO GAME BY

Designed by a Dungeon Master, the *Legends of Kitholan* CD by Dronolan's Tower (**www.dronolan.com**) offers fantasy role-players more than an hour of mood-appropriate gaming music, as recorded by a professional studio orchestra and choir. Tracks include music perfect for travel, combat, exploration and even resting at camp.

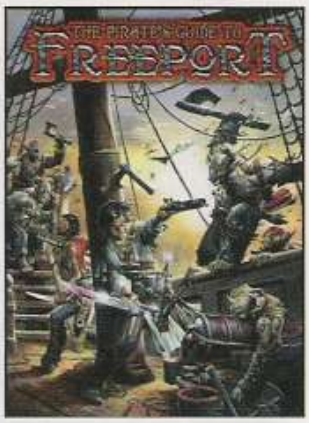
"The live musicians and singers add a great deal of life to this music," says composer David Allen Young. "I wanted a sound that would rival blockbuster film soundtracks, and even the best synths and samplers just can't cut it."

ART TO DIE FOR

Steel Sqwire, makers of gaming accessories including Flip-Mats and Stainless Steel Stat Cards, have moved dice off the gaming table and into the world of fine art with their new *Diesaics*. Premiering at GenCon Indy 2007, these intricate dice mosaics of fantasy art are composed of more than 2,000 hand-placed dice of various colors and designs. Conceived by Steel Sqwire's Jeff Peterson, the pieces are composed by artist Tony Mastangeli. In addition to works already completed, custom designs are also available for purchase at **steelsqwire.com**.

DEEP DELVE

Dwarven Forge (**dwarvenforge.com**) is taking subterranean adventures to new depths with their *Cavernous Lake Expansion Set*, featuring a variety of useful pieces that compliment the existing Master Maze products, especially the Cavernous Lake set. Long anticipated by fans, the set was originally slated for an appearance at this past Gen Con but was delayed when several pieces needed to be re-cast. "We want to thank everyone for their patience," said President Jeff Martin. "I think you will be very happy with the long wait. I recently received some photos of the prototypes, and all I can say is 'Wow.'"



GREEN RONIN GEAR

Fans of Freeport rejoice! Green Ronin Publishing (**greenronin.com**) continues to expand their pirate's paradise with the *d20 Freeport Companion*. Whereas the recently released *Pirates Guide to Freeport* updated the setting itself and contained no game statistics, the d20 *Freeport Companion* provides all of the mechanics and an introductory adventure. Also from Green Ronin, check out *The Deck of Illusions*, a game aid that brings an old favorite among D&D magic items to life. The deck includes thirty-six tarot-sized cards, each illustrated with the illusory beasts you have at your disposal

THIS MONTH IN DUNGEON #150

The Final Print Issue of *DUNGEON!*

KILL BARGLE!

by Jason Bulmahn

Return to D&D's Red Box and face Bargle, one of D&D's classic villains. A D&D adventure for 3rd-level characters.

QUOTH THE RAVEN

by Nicolas Logue

An old enemy holds the clues to unmask Sharn's deadliest new killer. An EBERRON adventure for 8th-level characters.

PRINCE OF DEMONS

by Greg A. Vaughan

Face the Prince of Demons as the fate of the multiverse hangs in the balance. The climax of the Savage Tide Adventure Path, a scenario for suicidal 20th-level characters.

DUNGEON INDEX

Including every *DUNGEON* adventure printed from issue #1 to #150, organized by game system and at your fingertips. Includes a look back at the magazine's top ten villains and top ten adventure locations.

NEVERWINTER NIGHTS II: MASK OF THE BETRAYER

Atari (**atari.com**) and Obsidian Entertainment (**obsidianent.com**) have announced this autumn's release of the first expansion to *Neverwinter Nights 2: Mask of the Betrayer*, a continuation of the acclaimed FORGOTTEN REALMS-based interactive game series. "*Neverwinter Nights 2: Mask of the Betrayer's* engrossing campaign will conclude the storyline that began in the original *Neverwinter Nights 2* and focus on combat, exploration and classic D&D dungeon-crawling," said Feargus Urquhart, CEO of Obsidian Entertainment. "We're also making new advances in story and character development as well as improving upon the acclaimed companion Influence System used in both *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic 2: The Sith Lords* and *Neverwinter Nights 2*."

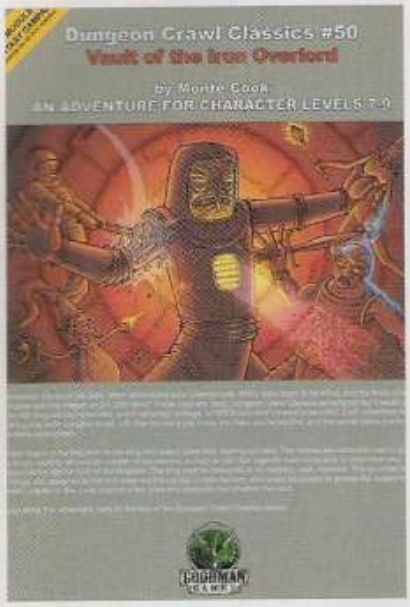
Keeping true to its D&D-based system, *Mask of the Betrayer* introduces epic levels, new feats and spells, new races, classes, and prestige classes, and loads of new monsters. FORGOTTEN REALMS fans in particular can look forward to a satisfying gaming experience in *Mask of the Betrayer*, as the adventure is set in Faerûn's Rashemen, near the wizard nation of Thay.

As with the original, *Neverwinter Nights 2* allows fans to use the included DM toolset to write their own adventures and game modifications. Check out ***nwn2.com*** to learn more.

CULDCEPT SAGA

Culdcept Saga brings a fantastical blend of collectible card games and board games together, creating an addictive, strategy game similar to a souped-up fantasy version of *Monopoly*. Players can play through a single-player game that includes an overarching storyline, or they can choose to compete with up to three other players at once online. As with collectible card games, players customize their decks with the cards they have on hand, and play their cards to improve their own standing while impeding opponents. In *Culdcept Saga*, you try to acquire territories and charge your opponents a gold piece value when they land on them. If the opponent chooses not to pay your pricey extortion fee, they must face the "landlord" monster that occupies that area (the nature of which is up to you depending on what monsters and other cards you have in your hand as the game progresses).

Many D&D fans will enjoy *Culdcept Saga* not only for the animated combat, monsters, spells, and other fantasy elements, but for the unique gameplay that comes from marrying collectible card games with RPG elements. Indeed, the artwork of many of the digital cards was created by some of the same artists to work on *Magic: The Gathering*. Look for *Culdcept Saga* to release for the Xbox 360 this month.



GOODMAN GOES GOLD

Goodman Games (**goodman-games.com**) has reached a golden milestone with the release of the fiftieth *Dungeon Crawl Classic*. DCC #50: *Vault of the Iron Overlord* features cover art by the legendary Erol Otus and a unique dungeon design by Monte Cook: the "Vault of Rings," a dungeon made up of concentric rings. The book even includes a "spinning wheel" map on the inside cover that actually spins. "This is a dungeon unlike any other we've published. I mean that literally," said Joseph Goodman. "As the heroes progress, the dungeon rotates, making the adventure (and their mapping) that much more challenging."

KEY LARGO COMES TO YOU

Take a vacation to the keys this November! In *Key Largo*, players take on the roles of treasure hunters in the Florida Keys in 1899, racing a disastrous hurricane in their search for sunken wealth. The brain child of game designer Paul Randles—best known for *Pirate's Cove*—*Key Largo* was left uncompleted when he passed away in 2003. Friends and famed designers Mike Selinker and Bruno Faidutti have since completed the game, releasing it to great popularity in Europe. This new edition by Titanic Games (**paizo.com/titanic**) brings the zany diving adventure to North America for the first time, with a fresh layout and mad-cap new art.

AN EVOLUTION IN CARNAGE

Hordes, Privateer Press's miniatures strategy game of brutal warbeasts and savage magic, gets its first expansion this fall with *Hordes: Evolution*. New rules, minis, faction-specific painting suggestions, a complete Theater of War campaign, and more fill this hard-bound tome, illustrated by some of fantasy's best artists.

Also new from Privateer comes *Infernal Contraption*, a multiplayer strategy card game of crazed goblin inventors competing to build the most outrageous, maniacal machines. You can check out more about these titles and more at **privateerpress.com**.

AT THE RED DRAGON INN

The Red Dragon Inn is where adventurers go to party after the adventure is over. In *The Red Dragon Inn*, a card game by Slugfest Games (**slugfestgames.com**), you get your character sloshed, gamble with your fellow adventurers, and try to avoid earning him a black eye. Play Dierdre the Priestess, Fiona the Volatile, Gerki the Sneak, or Zot the Wizard (and his insane, binge-drinking, bunny familiar). Each character has her own unique deck and abilities that allow her to gamble, cheat, steal the other adventurers' gold, and help her to hold her liquor.

BEOWULF ONBOARD

The story of Beowulf is coming to the big screen in November of 2007, directed by Robert Zemeckis with a screenplay by Neil Gaiman and Roger Avary. Along with it, Fantasy Flight Games (**fantasyflightgames.com**) is releasing *Beowulf: the Movie Board Game*. The players take on the role of Beowulf and his thanes, guiding them into epic battles against Grendel, Grendel's Mother, and the Golden Dragon. While gameplay is based on Reiner Knizia's *Kingdoms* board game, Beowulf features new special powers and boards. Players can also look forward to computer-generated art from the film incorporated into the game, not to mention a slew of sculpted plastic figures.

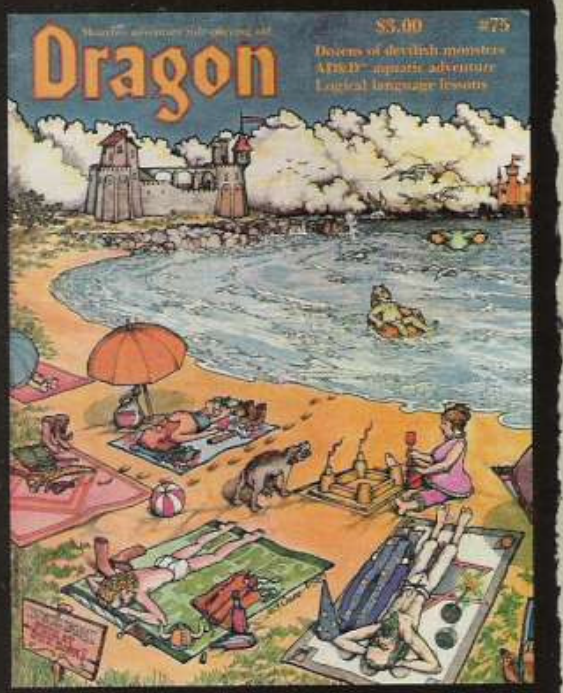
The Top 10 Issues of Dragon

30 Years of Fabled Tomes

compiled by Tim Hitchcock and Nicolas Logue • special thanks to all the messageboard readers on ***paizo.com*** *and* ***enworld.org****.*

Lying in the murky depths of a creaking suburban basement or packed in a decaying cardboard chest and tucked in the lightless recess of some forbidden closet, pages of power quietly molder. There, now too-snug clothes and vintage action figures stand sentinel over the tattered covers and well-worn spines of some the world's darkest tomes. Responsible for wreaking untold havoc on gaming groups everywhere, these vile creations were coaxed from the fiend-oppressed minds of a veritable rogue's gallery of mad wizards and sorcerer-kings—all who have paid the ultimate price of blood, sweat, and perhaps their very souls in obeisance to the great and mighty DRAGON. For the first time, the ten most fiendish of these tomes of dread power and D&D content are detailed in one place.

1 Avernish Codex



Common Name: Issue #75
Date: July 1983
Editor-in-Chief: Kim Mohan
Aura: Overwhelming Fiendish Evil
Caster Level: 20th
Cost: 1,000,000 gp ($15.00 on **paizo.com**)
Notable Articles:
"New Denizens of Devildom," by Gary Gygax
"The Nine Hells Part I," by Ed Greenwood
"Mutants, Men(?), and Machines," by Roger E. Moore

Among the greatest tomes of power, its pages were born of Avernus and detail the dread realm of the Nine Hells for any brave enough to read, including never-before-seen devils summoned by the mighty Archmage Gygax, Grand Explorer of the Planes. Readers of this book instantly gain the fell power to summon diabolic forces, bind them to their gaming sessions, and compel them to all manner of fiendish plots. Also, this tome of power offers a dread question that sparks an adventure: Can Seaport Be Saved? Only the brave or foolish answer this call and embark on a terrifying escapade of death and derring-do.

2 Book of the Nine Hells

Common Name: Issue #76
Date: August 1983
Editor-in-Chief: Kim Mohan
Aura: Overwhelming Diabolic Power
Caster Level: 19th
Cost: 900,000 gp ($2.95 on eBay)
Notable Articles:
"The Ecology of the Beholder," by Ed Greenwood and Roger E. Moore
"For NPCs Only, the Death Master," by Len Lakofka
"The Nine Hells, Part II," by Ed Greenwood

This blasphemous work of terror and hellfire details the Nine Hells, from Malbolge to Nessus, urging readers to gallivant about engaging in all manner of fiendish political backstabbing. Ed Greenwood also lends an insightful eye to the beholder, one of the most infamous monstrosities of all.

3 The Tomb of Forbidden Amalgamations

Common Name: Issue #318, Ninjas! Pirates! Dinosaurs!
Date: April 2004
Editor-in-Chief: Matthew Sernett
Aura: Strong Blasphemy
Caster Level: 18th
Cost: 800,000 gp ($7.98 on eBay)
Notable Articles:
"The Ninja," by Jesse Decker
"Oriental Adventures Update," James Wyatt
"Dungeons and Dinosaurs," by James Jacobs

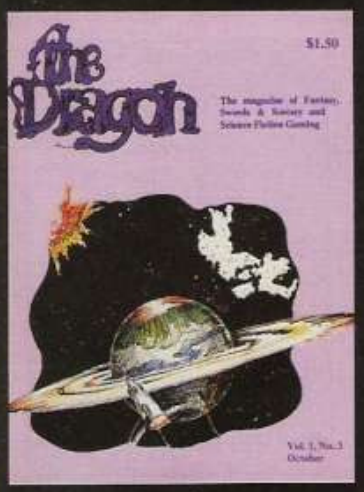
When Chris Thomasson penned the theme of issue #318—Pirates, Ninjas, and Dinosaurs, most thought it was just a joke. At least, they did until it was the next issue on the schedule. Matthew Sernett discovered the cryptic theme and ran with it. He even added his own unique spice to the mix: monkeys!

4 Libris Mortis Junior

Common Name: Issue #336
Date: October 2005
Editor-in-Chief: Erik Mona
Aura: Strong Necromancy
Caster Level: 16th
Cost: 600,000 gp ($7.00 on **paizo.com**)
Notable Articles:
"Not for the Living," by James Jacobs
"The Demonomicon of Iggwilv," by Owen K. C. Stephens and Gary Holian
"Ecology of the Spawn of Kyuss," by James Jacobs

In *Dragon*'s terrifying Samhain tradition, this death-spewing book proffers a host of horrors to plague players. Along with six hauntings by scholar of the profane James Jacobs, archivists Owen K. C. Stephens and Gary Holian reveal the spellbook of the nefarious Iggwilv, the Mother of Witches.

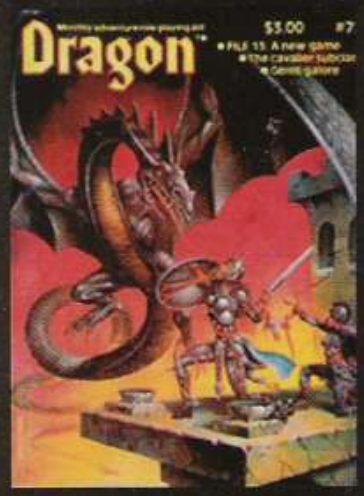
5 The Pastel Papers of Prodigious Professions



Common Name: Issue #3
Date: October 1976
Editor-in-Chief: Timothy J. Kask
Aura: Infinite Class Transmutation
Caster Level: 15th
Cost: 500,000 gp ($57.75 on eBay)
Notable Articles:
"Notes on Women & Magic," by Len Lakofka
"A New View of Dwarves," by Larry Smith
"Jesters!," by Charles Carner, Pete Simon, William Cannon

Herein lies fare far beyond the meager offerings of the *Player's Handbook*, including exotic choices such as berserkers, samurai, and the world's dumbest class (literally)—the idiot. One strangely misogynistic chapter even contains special rules for playing female characters, a faux pax long since kicked to the curb.

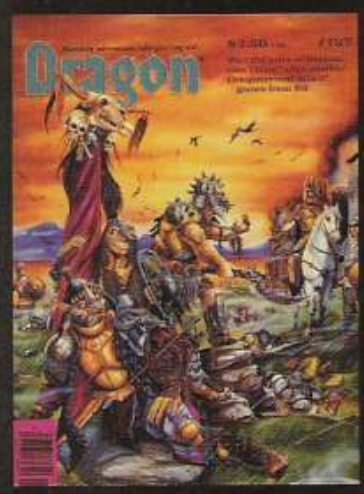
6 Libre Zappa Musica



Common Name: Issue #72, The Valley Elf Issue
Date: April 1983
Editor-in-Chief: Kim Mohan
Aura: Strong Musical Blasphemy
Caster Level: 14th
Cost: 400,000 gp ($5.00 on eBay)
Notable Articles:
"The Real Barbarians," by Katharine Kerr
"Everything We Think You Need to Know about Sex in the AD&D World" by Roger E. Moore
"The Ecology of the Piercer," by Chris Elliott and Richard Edwards

Continuing the tradition of April DRAGONS—bring on the funny. Why is this particular tome so well recalled? It wasn't the Duh Jock class, and it wasn't the first ecology ever printed. It was the famed and dreaded song that parodied Frank Zappa's *Valley Girl*: "Valley Elf! Valley Elf!"

7 The Art of War



Common Name: Issue #127, The Tucker's Kobolds Issue
Date: November 1987
Editor-in-Chief: Robin Jenkins, Roger E. Moore, Patrick L. Price
Aura: Strong Decapitation
Caster Level: 13th
Cost: 300,000 gp ($5.00 on eBay)
Notable Articles:
"Tucker's Kobolds," by Roger E. Moore
"No Quarter!," by Arn Ashleigh Parker
"A Menagerie of Martial Arts," by Len Carpenter

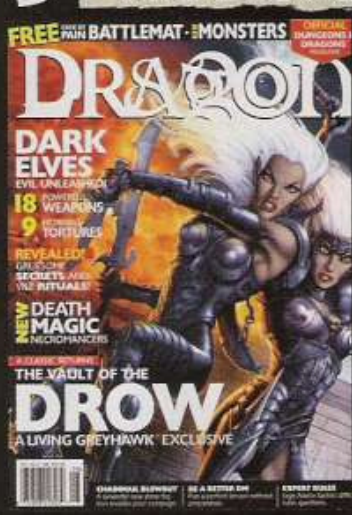
Penned by legendary warriors, this tome contains their secrets, from new styles of martial arts to ambushes and defensive shield tactics. It also solves the age-old question of how many hands it takes to wield specific weapons and gives statistics for Roland, Siegfried, and other legendary knights.

8 The Hitchhiker's Guide to Old Settings

Common Name: Issue #315, Campaign Classics
Date: January 2004
Editor-in-Chief: Chris Thomasson
Aura: Strong Translocation
Caster Level: 12th
Cost: 200,000 gp ($7.00 at **paizo.com**)
Notable Articles:
"Planescape: The Exiled Factions," by David Noonan
"Greyhawk: Regional Feats of Oerth," by Erik Mona
"Blackmoor: Guardians of the Docrae," by Mike Mearls

Tour the multiverse with this transdimensionally charged tome, offering its readers a window into worlds beyond their own. Varied venues of adventure, such Al-Qadim, Greyhawk, Ravenloft and others lay within these pages, along with reminisces by the demi-gods who had hands in forging these worlds.

9 The Drowonomicon



Common Name: Issue #298, The Sexy Drow Issue
Date: August 2002
Editor-in-Chief: Jesse Decker
Aura: Strong Arachnophobia
Caster Level: 11
Cost: 750,000 gp ($4.95 as a PDF on **paizo.com**)
Notable Articles:
"Flesh for Lolth—The Secret Life of Dark Elves," Robin D. Laws
"The Punishments of Lolth," Eric Cagle
"The Vault of the Drow—Dark Elf Metropolis," Frederick Weining

Past this tome's deadly covergirl, the secrets of the dark elves lie revealed! Found within these dreaded pages lurk a Living Greyhawk re-exploration of the classic Vault of the Drow; a bevy of the Underdark's sinister tools (poisons, drugs, weapons, etc.); and the dreaded Lolthtachwi, the punishments of Lolth!

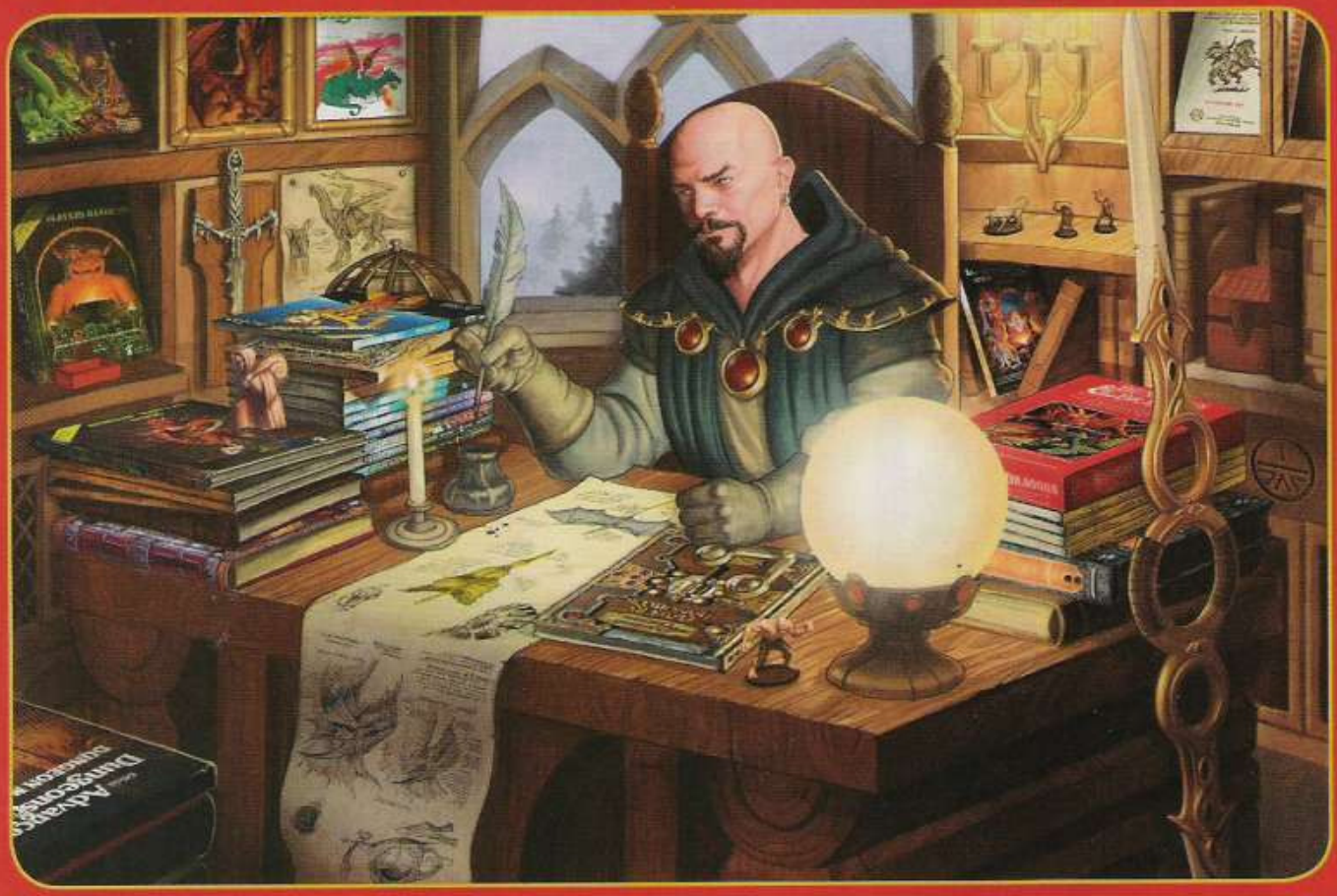
10 Encyclopedia Nauticus

Common Name: Issue #116
Date: December 1986
Editor-in-Chief: Roger E. Moore
Aura: Wet and Salty
Caster Level: 10
Cost: 100,000 gp ($3.00 on eBay)
Notable Articles:
"High Seas" by Margaret Foy; "Children of the Deep," by Todd Mossburg
"High Seas in 3-D," by Dennis Kauth
"Rogue Stones and Gemjumping," by Ed Greenwood

This log of nautical lore grants readers unfathomably deep insight into the mysteries of the waves and the darker secrets that lie beneath. The bearer of this book can even follow instructions to turn a special section into a magnificent sailing vessel capable of carrying a tiny crew across even the most dangerous bathtub or backyard pond.

compiled by the DRAGON and DUNGEON editors
illustrated by Jeff Carlisle

UNSOLVED MYSTERIES OF D&D



In its 33-year history, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS has crafted numerous mysteries that have, as a matter of policy or for the sake of mystery, gone unsolved. Finally, after decades of secrecy, we attempt to reveal a few of the unsolved mysteries of D&D.

Special thanks to Keith Baker, Ed Greenwood, Gary Gygax, Robert J. Kuntz, Jim Lowder, and James Wyatt for taking the time to help answer our questions.

EBERRON

Wizards of the Coast's newest campaign setting has several mysteries of its own, despite its youthfulness. EBERRON creator Keith Baker and EBERRON designer James Wyatt provided some answers.

WHAT CAUSED THE MOURNLAND?

"This is a question that I hope is never answered," says Keith Baker. "People always ask me if *I* know what caused the Mourning—if I've got a story that *I* use—and the truth is that I don't. I could give you half a dozen answers off the top of my head [see this issue's Dragonmarks on page 106 for some of Keith's ideas]. Any of those would work, and I simply haven't had a reason to pick one in my game."

Keith says it works better left as a mystery: "As a mystery, it can spawn an infinite number of adventures." As such, it allows a DM the freedom to create a campaign without worrying about contradicting established continuity. More importantly, according to Keith, the threat of a second Mourning keeps nations at the diplomatic table, preventing a relapse of the Last War. "As soon as there IS an answer," Keith says, "the tides of war can rise again."

"So to me," he concludes, "the question is far more important than the answer; it's the mystery of the Mourning that drives the game."

What does the draconic Prophecy say?

Keith Baker sees the Prophecy as a living, evolving thing. "When we think of a prophecy," he says, "we usually think of Nostradamus—a set of scrolls that says 'This event will happen at this time.' There's lots of these in Eberron. The Library of Ashtakala is filled with prophecies relating to the release of the fiendish overlords, for example."

Unlike those relatively normal prophecies, the draconic Prophecy is something much bigger, much more alive. "It manifests on the stones of the earth and the motion of the moons," says Keith, "the interaction of Eberron and Siberys. It might be the wisdom of the Progenitors themselves, passed down to their children. The issue is that it's never over: It's not just a set of dusty scrolls." Humans cannot follow the whole thing. Only the dragons, demons, and Undying Court can hope to understand it.

Even more than mundane prophecies, the draconic Prophecy only works at all because it is incredibly vague and never bothers with concreteness. It allows the DM all the flexibility he needs to use it as a start for adventures. Keith says, "Essentially, the Prophecy needs to create adventures as opposed to limiting them. It never tells players that they can't do something—but it can tell them what will happen if they do."

All of these possibilities, of course, lead to conflicts in their own rights. Multiple groups, including the Chamber and the Lords of Dust, wish to manipulate the Prophecy in their own ways, to make the future move in directions beneficial to them.

Keith likens the Prophecy to the Butterfly Effect: one small change cascades into enormous changes later. James Wyatt sees it more as an inevitability. This is the only point of the Prophecy where the two disagree. Keith describes the flow of events related to the Prophecy as "if X happens, Y will happen; if Y happens Z will happen," following that with, "if X doesn't happen, it's all up for debate." James interprets the Prophecy a little differently. "If X doesn't happen now," he says, "it will later." He goes on to say, "Everyone's trying to make X happen as they understand X, or in the way they want to interpret X. In other words, it's all in how you interpret X (and Y, and Z) and try to manipulate events so that your interpretation happens."

The draconic Prophecy doesn't reveal the future exactly. Instead, it offers a vast number of contingents. Keith says the Prophecy is filled with variables. The Prophecy reveals multiple possible futures, all of which are contingent on multiple conditions. Fulfill certain conditions and a cycle of the Prophecy reveals what should happen. "This is also why you see new bits of Prophecy constantly appearing," says Keith. Even dragons can never fully figure out its intricate details. It's not just a tool for knowing the future, it's a tool for knowing all possible futures and directing things the way you want."

For those looking for more information, James Wyatt is quick to point out the Dragonshards article Keith wrote. That article can be found online at **wizards.com**. James is also in the middle of writing The Draconic Prophecies trilogy, with the first one already out on shelves. It contains extensive quotations from a particular cycle of the Prophecy and explores the nature of the Prophecy in some detail.

Forgotten Realms

The Forgotten Realms have existed since before D&D, and in that time they have created a whole host of questions. We asked Ed Greenwood for the answers to some of these mysteries, and he replied with the following.

Is Ed Greenwood Elminster?

Ed had answered this one before, but we asked him to tell the tale one more time.

No, Ed Greenwood is NOT Elminster. For many years Ed Greenwood has had fun playing (lampooning, actually) Elminster at various conventions (a gig he started at the request of certain TSR staffers, "so blame them!"), but his ham acting abilities don't quite do justice to the ham acting abilities of the real Old Mage. Elminster goes much farther in rudeness than Ed ever would, and has an even less tenuous grip on sanity. Those who mistakenly believe that Elminster is Ed's alter ego or wish fulfillment character are reminded that Ed created thousands of well-known Realms characters, from Storm Silverhand to Azoun IV to Szass Tam, and if he was looking for a wish-fulfillment character he'd eagerly pick someone younger, saner, more handsome—and a whole lot less dangerous to be, and to be around.

What is Abeir (of Abeir-Toril)?

We know what Toril is, but Abeir?

Jeff Grubb (called by Ed "the original and superb Realms designer") coined the name Abeir-Toril for the planet of the Realms, because Ed postulated that most inhabitants of the continent he'd (largely) detailed had only a hazy idea that other landmasses existed (beyond small islands, that is), and so had only a name for their continent (Faerûn, which meant "home" in one of the old languages of the Realms). "Over the years," adds Ed, "most designers and gamers have shortened Abeir-Toril to just Toril, for reasons that will soon become apparent…"

Greyhawk

Created and developed at the same time as the rules for D&D, Greyhawk incorporated the ideas not just of Gary Gygax, but of his friends as well. With so many architects, of course, a few secrets naturally came to be.

Who is the mysterious "Y" in Maure Castle?

Throughout Robert J. Kuntz's Maure Castle adventure series in *Dungeon*, references are made to the family's mysterious patron, referred to only as "Y."

While unwilling to reveal the secret quite yet, Kuntz did offer the following. "'Y' is not Yeenoghu, and he is not a known god or outsider within recent reckoning. 'Y' might have connections to the Lost City of the Elders, to the most ancient members of the Maure Family line (especially 'Uncle'), and to a primal power as yet not released upon the World of Greyhawk, a power the family intended to summon at all costs. The summoning of 'Y' is always preceded by the calling forth of his unnamed servant, who always inhabits an immortal body to assist the servants of 'Y' in completing the complicated ritual to summon his master, which requires manipulating space and time to achieve."

What is the Serpent?

"…the Serpent speaks directly to Vecna. Others—daring to call themselves wizards, magicians, and sorcerers—manipulate the tiniest aspects of the Serpent and call it magic. But Vecna speaks to the Serpent, and the Serpent speaks back."

***—Vecna Reborn*, Monte Cook**

Among the greatest and most feared archmages, liches, and deities in D&D history—and one of the few beings to have experienced all three states—Vecna has ruled empires, shattered planar boundaries, and claimed the powers of godhood seemingly by force of will and magical might alone. Yet it's said that another being set Vecna upon his rise to power, an enigmatic being few—even the God of Secrets—know much, if anything, about: the Serpent.

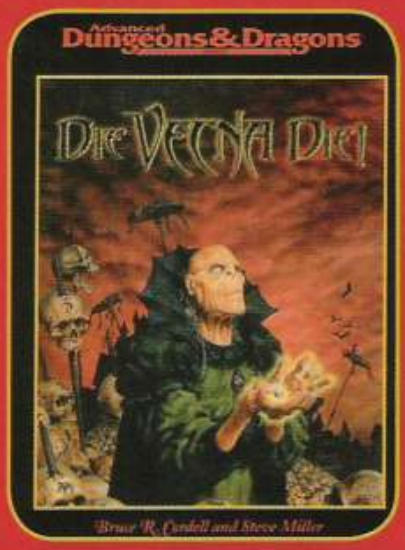
Who or what is the Serpent has been a long-debated topic. What is known is that it was supposedly the force that inspired Vecna to pursue and excel at the magical arts, revealing mysteries and secrets of spellcraft no mortal had ever before gleaned. This intimate understanding of magic has led many to believe that the Serpent is a personification of magic itself, with an unfathomable will of it's own. The quoted text from *Vecna Reborn* supports this theory, as does page 88 of the *Manual of the Planes*, which suggests the Serpent might be "an uber-deity of unimaginable power."

Another possibility proposes that this entity is one of a number of unfathomably old beings known as the Elders or Ancient Brethren (see *Die Vecna Die*). Who or what these beings were or are remains unclear, but Asmodeus, Jazirian (god of the couatls), the Lady of Pain, and the Serpent are all rumored to be of this ageless heritage. A connection between these entities and other creatures born of the

times before the multiverse, such as the baernoloths and draeden, doubtlessly exist.

Yet another similarity that can't be overlooked is the connection between Vecna's mentor and another being sometimes known as the serpent, the Archfiend and ruler of Hell, Asmodeus. From his lair deep in the pits of Baator, suggestively called The Serpent's Coil, the Lord of the Ninth's corruption and deceptions touch innumerable realms. While doubtlessly the most powerful of Hell's archdevils, some suggest that Asmodeus might in fact be the primal force of evil in the multiverse, supporting his possible connection to the Ancient Brethren. That Asmodeus would possess a deep understanding of magic, pose as another godlike being, and impart secrets to corrupt a mortal to great evil all seem in line with the subtle plotting of the nefarious Lord of Hell.

For all the possibilities reaching back to the origins of the multiverse and the most powerful beings in existence, though, a far simpler explanation of the Serpent exists:



it doesn't. Most likely, the ghostly voices in Vecna's head, inspiring him to heights of arcane brilliance and depths of depravity, are merely the whispers of his own insanity and dark genius.

Where did the Spaceship Come From?

The spaceship in question, of course, is the one that crashed in the Barrier Peaks back in 1976.

By the time the adventure *Expedition to the Barrier Peaks* takes place, the spaceship has been buried under rock for years and its original pilots are long dead. But who were they? Where did they come from?

The adventure itself answers these questions in an oblique manner—the text tells us that "Sometime else, a large exploration-colonization expedition of human origin was overtaken in the course of its journey by a deadly plague. In a vain effort to halt the spread of the virus, the modular sections of the vessel were sealed and then separated, each left to its own fate. The section concerned here was drawn through a black hole and spewed

This summer, Do Gooder Press presents:

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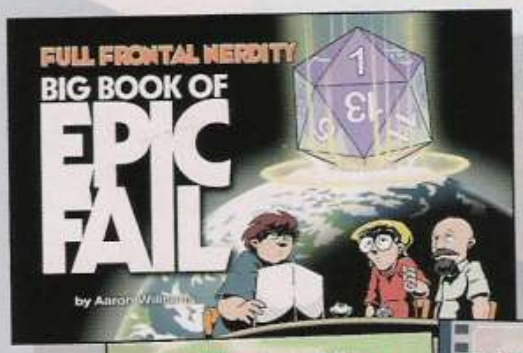

Four gamers. No lives. Roll for initiative! In their first 120-page collection, the guys from "Full Frontal Nerdity" bring you gaming gags, internet insanity, and comic collecting catastrophes in the "*Big Book of Epic Fail!*" This volume includes strips from the popular webcomic, as well as from Scrye and Comics Buyer's Guide!

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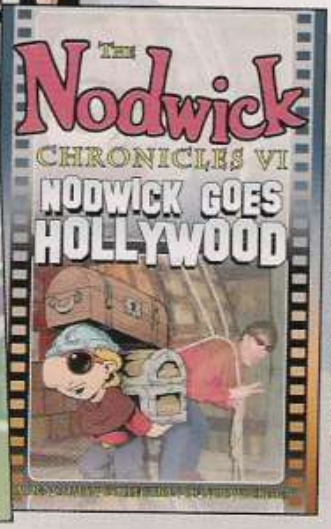

It was bound to happen: Nodwick has gone Hollywood! Celebrating his appearance in the upcoming movie, "*Gamers 2: Dorkness Rising*" from Dead Gentlemen Productions, this fine collection completes the epic "Baphuma'al" storyline, and continues to deliver the laughs and legends that have made Nodwick a staple of fantasy humor! So plan a road trip to la-la land this summer as "*Nodwick Goes Hollywood!*"

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A Gygax by Any Other Name

Throughout the history of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS no name has been the source of more alterations and anagrams that that of the game's creator: Ernest Gary Gygax. Presented here is a mere sampling of places, characters, and artifacts named after D&D's creator.

Name	Description
Gryrax	A city in Greyhawk
Prison of Xagig	Prisoner-shrinking cage
Ring of Gaxx	A cursed ring
Talisman of Zagy	A magical artifact
Xagy	Maker of *Ehlissa's Marvelous Nightingale*
Yagrax	Mage-priest from Isle of Woe
Yrag the Lord	Personal character of Gary Gygax
Zagig Yragerne	Lord-Mayor of Greyhawk turned god
Zagyg	Capacious god of magic

into the universe where the World of Greyhawk fantasy setting exists."

But what was on the other side of that black hole? It's likely the universe that spawned *Metamorphosis Alpha*, a game designed by Jim Ward (and the first science fiction RPG to be published). The central conceit of *Metamorphosis Alpha* was that the immense spaceship *Warden* was struck by an unknown cataclysmic event (such as a deadly plague, perhaps?) that had set it adrift in deep space. The PCs in this game are natives born on the *Warden*, generations later, who must contend with technology and mutants that none of them understand. The *Warden* included areas of botanical gardens and menageries, radiation was a common hazard, and the technology left around by the ship's long-dead precursors was as fantastic as it was scientific.

It's thus certainly no stretch of the imagination to identify the crashed ship in the Barrier Peaks as a section jettisoned from the *Warden* itself!

WHO IS TASHA?

A scan through the sorcerer and wizard spells in the *Player's Handbook* reveals a who's who of famous wizards from the World of Greyhawk—Bigby, Drawmij, Evard, Leomund, Nystul, Otto, Otiluke, Rary, Tenser, and of course, Mordenkainen. In many cases, these famous NPCs did dual-time as player characters for many of the game's creators, and all of them have, at one point, been featured in adventures or articles throughout the game's editions. All but one.

Tasha has but one spell to her name, one that likely made it into third edition when the game's designers realized a gap existed in the list of 2nd-level arcane enchantment spells. Of the three in the core rules now, both *daze monster* and *touch of idiocy* are brand new to 3.5—in 3.0, you only had Tasha to help. But beyond her one spell, who was she?

Until *Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk*, nothing more had been published in any official capacity about this mysterious woman, but adventurers who play through this new adventure get to finally learn who she actually is. If you wish to avoid spoilers for one of this adventure's secrets, skip ahead to the next mystery.

As revealed in that adventure, Tasha was a member of an infamous adventuring group known as the Company of Seven. For a time, she even served as one of Zagig's apprentices. And yet unlike her fellow members of the company, she left little in the way of legacies save for her one spell.

In *Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk*, the mystery is revealed at last—Tasha is the same woman who would go on to become one of Oerth's most feared and notorious wizards—the Witch Queen Iggwilv. As Tasha, she infiltrated the Company of Seven, posing as a wizard of much less power than she actually possessed—that she was able even to deceive Zagig points not only to the Mad Archmage's distracted personality, but to her own considerable skills. As a member of the Company, Iggwilv/Tasha was able to draw and build upon the secrets of six of the world's greatest wizards. It remains unclear what event forced her to abandon her Tasha alias and take on the mantle for which she would become so well-known.

Which begs the question—is Tasha Iggwilv's real name? While the answer to this is unclear, long-time readers of DRAGON might want to look back to issue #84's classic adventure by Roger Moore, "The Dancing Hut." In particular, check out area 15—Natasha's Chambers: "Natasha the Dark is an adopted human 'daughter' of Baba Yaga who was influenced by the witch to take up her sorcery and use it for dark purposes. A beautiful woman with smoky black hair and alabaster skin, Natasha enjoys manipulating demons, and uses them frequently as servants and guardians."

THE MISSING MODULES

About the time TSR expanded GREYHAWK from a folio to a boxed set, AD&D modules got a new alphanumeric code to support the setting. Thus was born the WG series, which would grow to include classic adventures like *Isle of the Ape*, *Fate of Istus*, *Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure*

(which introduced Maure Castle), and the *Vale of the Mage*. Curiously, the first in the series was *WG4: The Forgotten Temple of Tharizdun*. What happened to WG1, WG2, and WG3?

According to the Acaeum (**acaeum.com**), the premier D&D collector's website, WG1 and WG2 were set aside for *Village of Hommlet* and the long-delayed *The Temple of Elemental Evil*. WG3 was to be *Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth* (published as S4). Gary Gygax himself isn't so sure. "While the named modules were indeed set on Oerth, and a WG would have been appropriate, I do not recall ever asking for such a designator," he said. "Certainly *The Village of Hommlet* was dubbed T1 by me."

Also according to the Acaeum, WG7 was originally set aside for *Shadowlands*, but soon became the "joke" *Castle Greyhawk* that lampooned the dungeon responsible for the D&D hobby and enraged GREYHAWK fans. The mystery behind why someone thought that would be a good idea is, as Derek Smalls of Spinal Tap says, "best left unsolved."

PLANESCAPE

As the all-encompassing setting, PLANESCAPE allowed exploration not only of each world's mysteries, but it created more of its own.

WHO OR WHAT IS THE LADY OF PAIN?

"She's the one who blocks the powers from Sigil. She's the one whose influence prevents gate spells from working and who shields Sigil from the Astral Plane. She's the one who created the Mazes and traps Sigil's would-be conquerors."

—Sigil and Beyond, David "Zeb" Cook

No one knows who or what the Lady of Pain is. The undisputed and uncaring ruler of Sigil, the hub of the Outer Planes, it is by her might that deities and powerful magics do not intrude upon the City of Doors. Her powers and actions mark her as something both more and less than a deity. While she demonstrates the power to prevent all other deities from intruding upon her city and the ability to create demiplanes (the Mazes) at will, she possesses no worshipers—actively dissuading and destroying those who would dare pray to her—and has never exhibited power outside her city.

Numerous theories seek to explain the Lady of Pain and her role within Sigil. The most farfetched possibilities suggest that she might be a personification of Sigil itself or its countless philosophies, a reformed demon lord, a being hatched from a dabus egg by the dragon god Io, or an aspect of a dead god of portals. More elaborate possibilities have also been posed. The PLANESCAPE novel *Pages of Pain* suggests that the Lady of Pain might be a daughter of the Greek god Poseidon, while the video game PLANESCAPE: *Torment* implies that the Lady of Pain is a prisoner bound at the heart of the Outer Planes and that Sigil is her cage.

Additionally, some suggest that she is one of the unknowable Ancient Brethren—manifestations of primal forces and laws existent since the formation of the multiverse—and that her role is one of key multiplanar concern: protection of Sigil. The City of Doors has always been held as a place of unique importance at the heart of the Outer Planes, where all philosophies might meld and mix. Some have even suggested that Sigil is the keystone upon which the Outer Planes rely, and that all the planes' stability rests on the physical and philosophical peace of the city. Should one philosophy ever forcibly take hold, particularly through invasion or godly intervention, that change would be accounted for in the ordering, reordering, destruction, or creation of various Outer Planes. Thus, this theory proposes that it is the role of the Lady of Pain to maintain the status quo within Sigil, lest the multiverse be fundamentally changed (see *Die Vecna Die*).

Although little can be proven or deemed true about the Lady of Pain in D&D, outside of those realms inspiration for the Lady of Pain is drawn directly from the titular character in a poem by Algernon Charles Swinburne, "Dolores (Notre-Dame des Sept Douleurs)," i.e., "Dolores (Our Lady of Seven Sorrows)."

Regardless, what is known for sure about the Lady of Pain is very little besides that she is an embodiment of the mysteries of Sigil and all the planes found beyond her city's countless doors.

RAVENLOFT

Gothic horror and mysteries fit well together, and D&D's iconic gothic horror campaign setting, RAVENLOFT, has quite the mystery.

WHAT ARE THE DARK POWERS OF RAVENLOFT?

Perhaps more mysterious than any other entity (or group of entities) in the multiverse, none know the faces or the intentions of those enigmatic forces known collectively as the Dark Powers of Ravenloft.

Some have suggested they might be a cadre of imprisoned fiends or a pantheon of ageless, subtle, and evil deities. While their history remains secret, their acts are well documented and frequently speculated upon. Tied fundamentally to the Mists that pervade the Demiplane of Dread, the Dark Powers seemingly have two objectives: the imprisonment of the foulest villains of the Material Plane and the continual subtle tormenting of such captives.

Perhaps only once have the Dark Powers ever been known to directly communicate with a mortal: Count Strahd von Zarovich. Seeking a way to claim the love of his brother's fiancé, Tatyana, Strahd called out to any power that would aid him and was answered by a force that called

itself only "Death." Likely, this Death was a manifestation of the Dark Powers, which soon after claimed Strahd's realm of Barovia, laying it as the foundation of the disparate realms that would become the mist-shrouded world within the Demiplane of Dread.

As the Mists, the Dark Powers have the ability to reach into the Material Plane and transplant individuals, towns, or indeed even whole nations to the Demiplane of Dread. Yet, not all villains attract the attentions of these mysterious powers, as evidenced by the fact that countless tyrants, murderers, and worse dwell on innumerable material planar worlds. Rather, the attentions of the dark powers seem drawn to acts of subtle evil, corrupt passions, dark ambitions, and tragedy. Rarely do they intervene or inspire such deeds, but once such acts are committed then the Mists rise and claim their prize.

Aside from claiming evil souls, the Dark Powers manufacture tortures to torment those they hold. For example, the lich Azalin of the domain of Darkon is tormented by the ghost of his beloved, murdered son; Lamordia's Dr. Victor Mordenheim finds his attempts to scientifically resurrect his dead wife incessantly corrupted or just outside his ability; and—best known—Count Strahd von Zarovich is tortured by the constantly resurrected form of his beloved, whom he is forced to lose again and again. These torments seem to be integral to the Dark Powers' plans for their captives. In the rare times when a dark-lord ceases to be pained by his torments, or perhaps finds redemption, the prisoner is seemingly released—such as in the debatable case of Lord Soth.

Despite their fearful reputation, the Dark Powers might seem like a force for good, as they have removed dozens of potent evils from across the planes and now keep them contained. To what end these forces maintain their dark planar prison remains the question that disturbs planar travelers and scholars the most, though. While the Demiplane of Dread might be perceived as a prison, many view it as a concentrated and growing cancer of evil afloat in the ethers. Some have even suggested that the demiplane might serve as a stepping-stone between the multiverse and some other evil reality. Again, none know for sure, but all are right to dread.

The Metagame

The act of making D&D sometimes creates its own mysteries.

D&D's Lost Manuscripts

In any publishing enterprise, books tumble on and off schedules as consumer and publisher tastes change. Most of the time this happens months or years before a product's release, but in some cases a "would-be" D&D book survives long enough that word of its title and contents sneaks into the outside world. The trend started early, in Gary Gygax's "From the Sorceror's Scroll" column in these very pages. The most famous piece of D&D vaporware is undoubtedly Gygax's *Castle Greyhawk*, an official adaptation of the dungeon that started it all. In the years since Gary's numerous mentions of the book in his column, no fewer than four different versions of the castle have appeared in one form or another, but we're still waiting for (and probably will never get) the genuine article.

Other "almost" products include:

Wasp Nest: The City State of Stoink: An official Gygax *Castle Greyhawk* might never happen, but this product, a sourcebook featuring a bandit city and its adventure-rich environs, was ready to go to the printer when Gygax was forced out of TSR in 1986. It was mentioned in Gary's DRAGON column that Rob Kuntz and Skip Williams both playtested the adventure, but the only surviving scrap of the manuscript is a map stolen from Gygax's office just before he left the company. Limited detail on the city appears in the Gord the Rogue novel *Artifact of Evil*.

Shadowland: Also plugged in the pages of the Sorceror's Scroll was this sourcebook/adventure featuring the infamous Demiplane of Shadow, a wedding, and several of Gygax's quasi-deities. Despite the fanfare in DRAGON the book—to be written by Gygax and Skip Williams—never got beyond the "notes" stage. Remnants exist in Williams's shadow mastiff and slow shadow and in Gygax's Gord novel *City of Hawks*, which features an extensive sequence in the Shadowland.

A Guide to the Cage: Written and almost finished by PLANESCAPE creator David "Zeb" Cook in the tumultuous time between the collapse of TSR and D&D's ultimate rescue by Wizards of the Coast, this product managed to appear in catalogs before being shelved with the demise of the PLANESCAPE line. Surviving material found its way into *Faction War*, a Sigil-based adventure that tied up many of the setting's loose ends.

The Shores of Dusk: With their hit novelist R.A. Salvatore writing his non-D&D Demon Wars saga for Del Rey and

unable to come to terms regarding more stories featuring his famous character Drizzt Do'Urden, TSR looked elsewhere to continue the dark elf's saga. Novelist Mark Anthony was given the job, having successfully passed a Drizzt test with his novella "The Fires of Narbondel," from *Realms of the Underdark*. Ads for the book, *The Shores of Dusk*, appeared in DRAGON, but the completed manuscript itself was swallowed whole when Wizards of the Coast acquired TSR. The new regime fixed things with Salvatore, and Drizzt has been a single-author character ever since.

City of Sin: Wizards of the Coast's experiment with "mature" content was originally more ambitious than simply the *Book of Vile Darkness* and *Book of Exalted Deeds*. As a way to show off the new rules released in these tomes, Wizards recruited star designer Bruce R. Cordell to create a truly evil city packed with dangerous monsters and diabolical plots (some of a decidedly "adult" nature). References to it appeared in *Savage Species*, but internal politics scotched the completed book, which remains tucked away on Wizards of the Coast computers to this day.

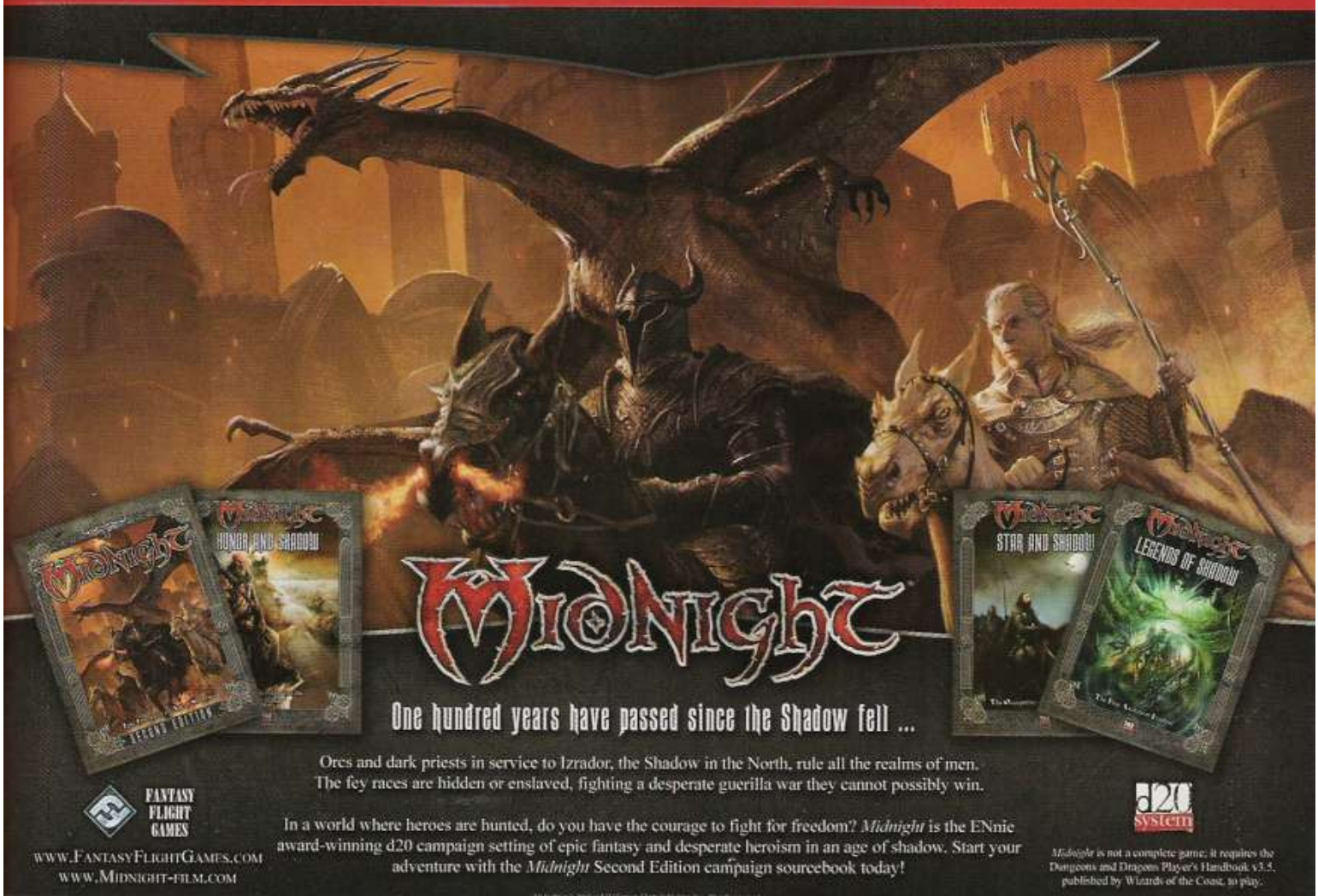
RICHARD AWLINSON AND T.H. LAIN

They handled two of the most important D&D fiction initiatives ever. One of them "blew up" the FORGOTTEN REALMS in the much-maligned Avatar trilogy that mixed gods with mortals and fictionalized the transition from first to second edition. The other wrote every single book in a 10-volume series that gave character to D&D icons like Regdar, Lidda, and Krusk. They are actually twelve different authors.

Both the Awlinson and Lain pseudonyms came about for the same reason: so books in a single series would be racked next to each other at book stores, rather than racked randomly according to the actual author's last name. Awlinson—a play on "all-in-one"—stood in for Scott Ciencin on *Shadowdale*, Troy Denning on *Waterdeep*, and a collaboration between Ciencin and series editor Jim Lowder on *Tantras*. When Wizards of the Coast reprinted the Avatar Trilogy in 2003, they dropped the Awlinson name altogether.

But they weren't quite finished with pseudonyms. That same year Wizards experimented with their own "house name," this time T.H. Lain, a come-from-nowhere genius who managed to crank out ten books featuring the game's new iconic characters. In fact, nine authors used the Lain name in the series to keep the books together in book stores. A few years back, Wizards publicly announced the ploy and released the names of the real T.H. Lain(s). They are:

- *The Savage Caves*—Philip Athans (Wizards of the Coast book editor)
- *The Living Dead*—Cory Herndon (Wizards of the Coast editor)
- *Oath of Nerull*—Bruce R. Cordell (Wizards of the Coast designer)


Midnight
Honor and Shadow
Star and Shadow
Legends of Shadow
Midnight
One hundred years have passed since the Shadow fell ...
Orcs and dark priests in service to Izrador, the Shadow in the North, rule all the realms of men.
The fey races are hidden or enslaved, fighting a desperate guerilla war they cannot possibly win.
In a world where heroes are hunted, do you have the courage to fight for freedom? *Midnight* is the ENnie award-winning d20 campaign setting of epic fantasy and desperate heroism in an age of shadow. Start your adventure with the *Midnight* Second Edition campaign sourcebook today!
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d20 system
Midnight is not a complete game; it requires the Dungeons and Dragons Player's Handbook v3.5, published by Wizards of the Coast, to play.

- *City of Fire*—Ed Stark (former D&D Design Manager)
- *The Bloody Eye*—Johnny L. Wilson (former Paizo publisher)
- *Treachery's Wake*—Nate Levine (freelance writer)
- *Plague of Ice*—Murray J.D. Leder (freelance writer)
- *The Sundered Arms*—Dave Gross (former DRAGON editor)
- *Return of the Damned*—Jess Lebow (Wizards of the Coast book editor)
- *The Death Ray*—Philip Athans (Wizards of the Coast book editor)

Is Earth Part of the D&D Multiverse?

The answer to this one might surprise you.

- In a 1984 interview for *Polyhedron*, Gary Gygax said: "By the way, action takes place on Yarth, a place somewhat similar to Oerth, the setting of Greyhawk, et al. It has fewer magical properties than Oerth, but more than Earth. It is not impossible that additional works will be contracted for in months to come, action being set on Yarth or perhaps another alternate world, Aerth. On Earth, magic is virtually non-existent. On Uerth, dweomers are weak, chancy things. Yarth has a sprinkling of things magical, and Oerth is pure magic."

- Several deities of the FORGOTTEN REALMS have their origin in Earth mythology. Early DRAGON articles about the setting often mentioned connections between the two worlds (most explicitly in Ed Greenwood's "The Wizards Three" series that concludes in this issue).
- St. Cuthbert was one of the most important saints of medieval England, and is regarded as the patron saint of Northumbria. This might be explained away as a coincidence or the real saint inspiring the fictional one, but then how to explain DRAGON #100's "The City Beyond the Gate," in which the PCs must rescue the *Mace of St. Cuthbert* from its prison in a modern-day London museum? The adventure chalks it up to "another universe," but its clear the fantasy world of D&D links to the real world of DRAGON magazine.
- Then, of course, there's the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS cartoon, in which a group of gamers enters a theme park D&D ride only to be transformed into rangers, thief-acrobats, wizards, and cavaliers in a world that is clearly a part of the game's multiverse. The show ended before the kids ever returned to Earth, but we like to think they're still out there looking for a way back just like we're still trapped here, looking for the greatest theme park ride in history to lead us away from this boring old place.

Missing Persons

Sometimes people in the game industry suddenly disappear, never again to produce another beloved product.

Whatever happened to David A. Trampier?

Trampier was the writer and artist of "Wormy," a popular comic strip that ran in DRAGON, before he suddenly vanished in 1988, ending his strip without explanation in the middle of a storyline.

His complete and unexpected disappearance from the public eye spurred rumors of his death, but a 2002 article in the student newspaper of Southern Illinois University featured a local taxi driver named David Trampier and included a photograph. Although the article did not mention any gaming or artistic career, the article prompted fresh speculation, and rumors of his death were officially denied by Wizards of the Coast in 2003 and his brother-in-law Tom Wham in 2004.

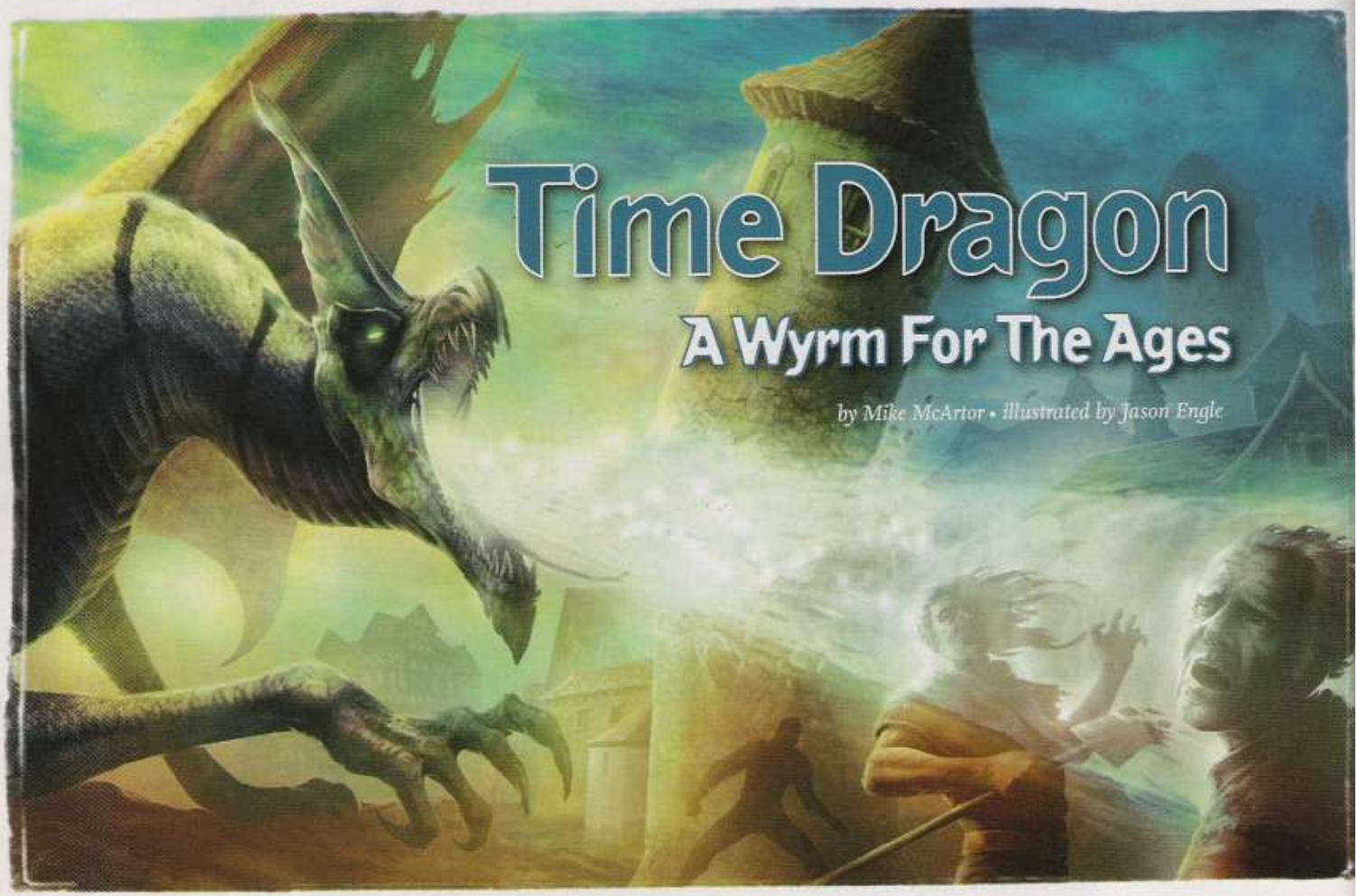
Most recently, in 2005, KenzerCo Vice President Jolly Blackburn stated on **RPG.net** that he had spoken with Trampier about a Wormy compilation a few years prior. "He politely asked me not to call him again and to lose his number," said Blackburn. "Apparently a lot of people tracked him down through the same article and he was fed up with all the phone calls. Seemed like a nice guy. He just wants nothing to do with the strip or the gaming industry."

Whatever happened to Carl Sargent?

This notable D&D designer of 80s and 90s is known for his work on such books as *Iuz the Evil*, *The City of Skulls*, and the unpublished work *Ivid the Undying*.

Outside the world of gaming, Carl worked in the fields of psychology and experimental parapsychology at the University of Cambridge, where he published several papers in conjunction with noted scholar Hans Eysenck.

In the late 1990s, Carl Sargent was offered a job at FASA in Chicago. Somewhere between Cambridge University and Chicago, he disappeared. The only thing that everyone seems to agree on is that he suffered some sort of "medical problem." One unconfirmed report indicates he was in an automobile accident. The nature of his unknown illness, as well has his location for the past several years, remains one of D&D's most elusive unsolved mysteries.



Time Dragon

A Wyrm For The Ages

by Mike McArtor • illustrated by Jason Engle

Dragonkind has a unique relationship with time, growing ever more powerful while never sinking into dementia or bodily decay as a result of the accumulation of years, centuries, or millennia. One breed of dragon interacts with time in a manner completely its own, breathing it, eating it, and living as a part of it in such a way as to become a physical manifestation of time itself. This breed, arguably the most rare and most powerful of all dragons (competing even with the draconic deities themselves), is the epic time dragon.

Epic Dragon Qualities

First introduced in the *Epic Level Handbook*, epic dragons share the same general traits as true dragons: they are massive winged reptilian creatures defined by twelve age categories, powerful breath weapons, and numerous physical attacks. Epic dragons differ from common dragons in their sheer size (even wyrmlings are Huge), their longer lifespans (and greater increases in power levels from age category to age category), and the unusual energies or concepts (in this case, time) over which they extend mastery.

While "common" dragons easily fall into categories based on alignment and temperament, epic dragons display greater individual variation. Epic dragons tend heavily toward neutral, as they care more for their own interests than for the well-being or subjugation of other creatures, thus rejecting the extremes of alignment and the conflicts they engender. Epic dragons show a range of personalities wider, perhaps, than even that of humans: some live as selfish and ill-tempered hermits while others battle evil or good with the same fervor as outsiders of the opposing alignment. Like other dragons, however, most epic dragons covet and hoard wealth, although their collections tend to focus less on coins and more on magic, lore, and exquisite pieces of art.

All epic dragons speak Draconic.

Combat

Epic dragons share all the combat characteristics of standard dragons, as described in the *Monster Manual*. Even wyrmling epic dragons are Huge, however, and can make tail sweep and crush attacks. The oldest epic dragons grow to such titanic proportions that other Colossal dragons seem small in comparison.

Although no size category exists beyond Colossal, the oldest epic dragons possess greater reach and deal more damage with their attacks than other Colossal dragons, as shown on the following tables. In addition, the breath weapons of the oldest epic dragons reach further than those of most Colossal dragons. The size modifier for these dragons remains –8. The tables of this article and in the *Epic Level Handbook* designate dragons of this truly titanic size as Colossal+.

Wyrmling epic dragons possess certain abilities that common dragons do not acquire until later in life, including frightful presence, spellcasting, and spell resistance. An epic dragon with a caster level above 20th gains the Improved Spell Capacity feat as a bonus feat once for every three caster levels above 20th. Any epic dragon can choose epic feats for which it otherwise meets the prerequisites.

Empower Spell-Like Ability: An epic dragon can apply the Empower Spell feat to one of its spell-like abilities that it can use at least twice per day. If the dragon has limited use of the spell-like ability, the empowered ability uses up two uses of the ability. If the dragon can use the ability at will, there is no cost for empowering the ability. The dragon does not need to specify a spell-like ability when it chooses this feat; it can apply the feat to any spell-like ability it possesses.

Maximize Spell-Like Ability: The dragon can apply the Maximize Spell feat to one of its spell-like abilities that it can use at least three times per day. If the dragon has limited use of the spell-like ability, the maximized ability uses up three uses of the ability. If the dragon can use the ability at will, there is no cost for maximizing the ability. The dragon does not need to specify a spell-like ability when it chooses this feat; it can apply the feat to any spell-like ability it possesses.

Epic dragons fly even faster than common dragons and can cover greater distances.

Epic Dragon Overland Flying Speeds

	—Flight Speed—		
One Hour	250 feet	300 feet	350 feet
Normal	40 miles	50 miles	60 miles
Hustle	80 miles	100 miles	120 miles
One Day			
Normal	320 miles	400 miles	480 miles

Except as noted here, epic dragons conform to the general information that applies to all dragons given in the *Monster Manual*.

Time Dragon

Always N dragon

This dragon's charcoal-gray scales lay close to its flesh and bear no ridges, giving the creature a smooth look. An hourglass-shaped mask of black scales surrounds its eyes and twelve unevenly spaced lines of black scales radiate back along its body, like tree rings. A spike in the shape of a typical gnomon extends from the back of its skull, effectively doubling the length of its head. Its triangular wings spread from their narrowest points at its back to give them the overall shape of an hourglass. Two spikes of different lengths protrude from the end of its tail, giving it two tips.

Epic Dragon Attacks

Size	1 Bite	2 Claws	2 Wings	1 Tail Slap	1 Crush	1 Tail Sweep
Huge	2d8	2d6	1d8	2d6	2d8	—
Gargantuan	4d8	2d8	2d6	2d8	4d6	2d6
Colossal	4d8	4d6	2d8	4d6	4d8	2d8
Colossal+	6d6	4d8	4d6	4d8	6d6	4d6

Epic Dragon Face, Reach, and Breath Weapon Length

Size	Face	Reach (Bite)	Line[1]	Cone[2]
Huge	15 ft.	10 ft. (15 ft.)	100 ft.	50 ft.
Gargantuan	20 ft.	15 ft. (20 ft.)	120 ft.	60 ft.
Colossal	30 ft.	20 ft. (30 ft.)	140 ft.	70 ft.
Colossal+	40 ft.	30 ft. (40 ft.)	160 ft.	80 ft.

1 A line is always 5 feet high and 5 feet wide.
2 A cone is as high and wide as it is long.

Breath Weapons (Su): A time dragon has two types of breath weapon, a line of ravaging time and a cone of time expulsion. Creatures and objects within a line of ravaging time age 1 year per age category (no save); creatures take 1 point of Constitution damage and objects lose 1 point of hardness per age category of the dragon (Fortitude half). Creatures within a cone of time expulsion disappear and cannot act for 1 round per age category of the dragon (Will negates). These creatures are not under the effect of a *time stop*, they are thrown into the future a number of rounds and effectively do not exist until the timestream catches up with them.

Time Control (Su): A time dragon emerges from its egg with some level of natural control over the flow of time and its own place within the flow. From hatching, a time dragon can accelerate its actions relative to the actions of others. As a free action, a time dragon can will itself to move more quickly, enabling it to act as though affected by a *haste* spell for up to 5 rounds each day. The duration of the *haste* effect need not be consecutive rounds.

Time dragons are immune to *slow* effects.

***Time Stop* (Sp):** As a standard action, a time dragon can cast *time stop* at will. The time dragon cannot remain completely removed from the timestream, however, and must wait 2d4 rounds between uses of this ability.

Draconic Surge (Ex): A very young or older time dragon can, once per day as a swift action, borrow time from the future. This allows the time dragon to take an extra standard or move action during its turn. An old or older time dragon can use this ability twice per day.

Time Mastery (Su): Thanks to its greater control over its connection (or lack thereof) to the flow of time, an adult or older time dragon operates continuously under the effects of a *haste* spell. A time dragon cannot suppress this ability, and if dispelled it automatically resumes at the start of the time dragon's next turn (this requires no action or conscious thought on the part of the time dragon).

TIME DRAGONS BY AGE

Age	Size	Hit Dice (hp)	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha	Base Attack/ Grapple	Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Breath Weapon (DC)	Frightful Presence DC
Wyrmling	H	44d12+396 (682)	47	10	29	30	37	30	+44/+70	+60	+33	+24	+37	1 (41)	42
Very young	G	49d12+539 (857)	51	10	33	34	41	34	+49/+81	+65	+37	+26	+41	2 (45)	46
Young	G	54d12+702 (1,053)	55	10	37	38	45	38	+54/+88	+72	+42	+29	+46	3 (50)	51
Juvenile	G	59d12+885 (1,268)	59	10	41	42	49	42	+59/+95	+79	+46	+31	+50	4 (54)	55
Young adult	C	64d12+1,088 (1,504)	63	10	45	46	53	46	+64/+106	+82	+51	+34	+55	5 (59)	60
Adult	C	69d12+1,311 (1,759)	67	10	49	50	57	50	+69/+113	+90	+55	+37	+59	6 (63)	64
Mature adult	C	74d12+1,554 (2,035)	71	10	53	54	61	54	+74/+120	+97	+60	+40	+64	7 (68)	69
Old	C	79d12+1,817 (2,330)	75	10	57	58	65	58	+79/+127	+104	+64	+42	+68	8 (72)	73
Very old	C+	84d12+2,125 (2,677)	79	10	61	62	69	62	+84/+134	+111	+69	+45	+73	9 (77)	78
Ancient	C+	89d12+2,403 (2,981)	83	10	65	66	73	66	+89/+141	+118	+73	+47	+77	10 (81)	82
Wyrm	C+	94d12+2,726 (3,337)	87	10	69	70	77	70	+94/+148	+125	+78	+50	+82	11 (86)	87
Great wyrm	C+	99d12+3,069 (3,712)	91	10	73	74	81	74	+99/+155	+132	+82	+52	+86	12 (90)	91

TIME DRAGON ABILITIES BY AGE

Age	Speed	Init	AC	Special Abilities	CL	SR	CR
Wyrmling	40 ft., fly 300 ft. (average)	+0	42 (–2 size, +44 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 42	DR 10/epic, time control, *time stop*	4th	35	26
Very young	50 ft., fly 350 ft. (poor)	+0	45 (–4 size, +49 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 45	Draconic surge 1/day	7th	42	33
Young	50 ft., fly 350 ft. (poor)	+0	50 (–4 size, +54 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 50	DR 15/epic	10th	48	39
Juvenile	50 ft., fly 350 ft. (poor)	+0	55 (–4 size, +59 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 55	*Slow*	13th	54	45
Young adult	60 ft., fly 350 ft. (clumsy)	+0	56 (–8 size, +64 natural), touch 2, flat-footed 56	DR 20/epic, DR 10/—	16th	62	53
Adult	90 ft., fly 380 ft. (clumsy)	+0	62 (–8 size, +69 natural, +1 dodge), touch 3, flat-footed 61	Time mastery	19th	69	60
Mature adult	90 ft., fly 380 ft. (clumsy)	+0	66 (–8 size, +74 natural, +1 dodge), touch 3, flat-footed 66	DR 20/epic, DR 15/—	22nd	76	67
Old	90 ft., fly 380 ft. (clumsy)	+0	71 (–8 size, +79 natural, +1 dodge), touch 3, flat-footed 71	Draconic surge 2/day	25th	82	73
Very old	100 ft., fly 380 ft. (clumsy)	+0	76 (–8 size, +84 natural, +1 dodge), touch 3, flat-footed 76	DR 20/—	28th	79	70
Ancient	100 ft., fly 380 ft. (clumsy)	+0	81 (–8 size, +89 natural, +1 dodge), touch 3, flat-footed 81	*Slow* aura	31st	85	76
Wyrm	100 ft., fly 380 ft. (clumsy)	+0	86 (–8 size, +94 natural, +1 dodge), touch 3, flat-footed 86		34th	91	82
Great wyrm	100 ft., fly 380 ft. (clumsy)	+0	91 (–8 size, +99 natural, +1 dodge), touch 3, flat-footed 91	Time apotheosis	37th	99	90

This increased control also allows a time dragon of at least adult age to slip into and out of the timestream more effectively. It must wait only 1d4 rounds between uses of its *time stop* spell-like ability.

Slow Aura (Su): An ancient or older time dragon possesses godlike control over time but also a much lesser amount of control over the space around it. It can express this control by emanating a *slow* aura up to 10 feet per age category for up to 10 rounds each day. Choosing to emanate the *slow* aura is a free action that must be made every round the time dragon wishes to maintain it. The duration of the *slow* aura need not be consecutive rounds. Creatures are automatically affected as by the *slow* spell (no save) each round they begin their turn within the area of the aura.

Time Apotheosis (Ex): Once it lives long enough to become a great wyrm, a time dragon has such an intricate tie to the timestream that it can move backward and forward through time almost at will. This movement through time allows a great wyrm time dragon to wait only 1 round between uses of its *time stop* spell-like ability. In addition, a

great wyrm time dragon becomes immune to any spell or effect with a duration greater than instantaneous cast on it by another creature, as well as effects that can affect it over time or that require the passage of time (such as dehydration, disease, poison, and starvation). It is not immune to its own noninstantaneous spells and effects.

Because a great wyrm time dragon can travel into possible futures, it rolls 2d20 on every d20 roll it makes, taking the better of the two results.

Lastly, a great wyrm time dragon can make forays into the past and into possible futures. Such forays require preparation, and cannot be performed within the timeframe of a combat. See the Traveling Through Time sidebar.

Spell-Like Ability: At will—*time stop* (wyrmling and older must wait 2d4 rounds, adult and older must wait 1d4 rounds, great wyrm must wait 1 round); 3/day—*slow* (juvenile or older).

Skills: All Knowledge skills and Speak Languages are class skills for time dragons.

Time dragons, also sometimes called chronology dragons, epoch dragons, or ageless dragons, rarely deign to interact with mortals—or even, for that matter, immortals.

Strategies and Tactics

Time dragons have better things to do than to engage in the potential dangers of combat. As such, they never hesitate to use every ability at their disposal to end a fight as quickly as possible or to simply flee if overwhelmed. Note that most time dragons are as satisfied with incapacitating enemies as killing them. They make extensive use of their *time stop* ability to move around the battlefield and set up spells to hinder or kill their opponents. Generally, time dragons start with their most powerful spells, weakening any who survive with their ravaging time breath. Time dragons never willingly fight to the death.

Traveling Through Time

Generally, the longer into the past or future the time dragon wishes to explore, the more resources it must expend. The details of this preparation, as well as the actual specifics of time travel, are outside the scope of this article and really only affect PCs if they become willing (or unwitting) assistants to a time dragon.

At the very least, a time dragon must spend several minutes in preparation of traveling through time, meditating and preparing itself physically and mentally for its journey.

For more information on this topic, see the Time Traveling Campaigns sidebar of "Chronomancy," in *Dragon* #350.

Ecology

Only disasters or other creatures can kill time dragons. The passage of time itself cannot. As such, they are the only truly immortal nondeific dragons. Because of their unique ties to the timestream, time dragons age randomly. Knowing the age category of a time dragon does not, therefore, give an accurate estimation of its age, as shown on the following chart. To use this chart, roll for each age category the dragon has to see how long it took for it to reach its current level of maturity (and to give you an idea of its actual age).

d%[1]	Time
up to 05	5d12 minutes
06–15	1d12 hours
16–25	1d6 days
26–35	1d4 weeks
36–45	1d12 months
46–65	1d10 years
66–85	1d10 decades
86–00	1d10 centuries
above 00	1d2 millennia

1 For each age category the dragon possesses, add 5% to this roll.

Time dragons younger than great wyrms can go months without eating, but doing so makes them lethargic. As dragons, they can eat anything and frequently do so, not bothering with hunting down living food.

Environment: Time dragons can and do live anywhere they find air to breathe. They prefer remote locations for their lairs, although as seminomadic creatures they rarely claim a place as a lair for more than a few years. Great wyrms

often relocate their lairs to some distant point in time, such as before the rise of humanoids or after their fall.

Typical Physical Characteristics: A wyrmling time dragon's scales appear silvery white and lack black stripes or a black eye mask. As the time dragon approaches very young, its mask and stripes grow in and its scales darken. The black stripes gradually change as the time dragon ages, each moving back along the length of its body and reappearing again near its eye mask when the twelfth stripe runs off the tip of its tail.

Society

Time dragons have no society. They live apart from one another and other living creatures, preferring to spend the time they deign to socialize with deities and other powerful immortals. Roughly once a millennium, a group of four to ten time dragons comes together for the purpose of procreation. As soon as all the females in the group have been fertilized the dragons disband and, likely, never again see one another.

Treasure

Time dragons rarely put much effort into their hoards, abandoning and rebuilding them hundreds of times over the long course of years. A time dragon does jealously guard any piece in its hoard that measures time, from a mundane sundial to a mechanically wondrous waterclock.

Sample Time Dragon

GIOTRACTUSZEIT **CR 24**

Male wyrmling time dragon
N Huge dragon

Init +0; Senses blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., keen senses, low-light vision; Listen +60, Spot +60

Aura frightful presence (30 ft., DC 42)

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, plus 55 more dialects and racial languages

AC 52, touch 8, flat-footed 52 (–2 size , +44 natural)

hp 682 (44 HD); **DR** 10/epic

Immune paralysis, sleep, *slow*

SR 31

Fort +33, **Ref** +24, **Will** +37

Spd 40 ft., fly 300 ft. (average); Hover, Wingover

Melee bite +61 (2d8+27/19–20/x2) and 2 claws +59 each (2d6+18) and 2 wings +59 each (1d8+9) and tail slap +59 (2d6+27)

Space 15 ft. Reach 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Base Atk +44; Grp +70

Atk Options Awesome Blow, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Snatch, empower spell-like ability, maximize spell-like ability

Special Actions breath weapon, crush (2d8+27, Reflex DC 41)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 4th)

2nd (6/day)—*bear's endurance*

1st (9/day)—*mage armor, ray of enfeeblement* (+44 ranged touch), *shield*

0 (6/day)—*detect magic, flare* (DC 20), *mage hand, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 44th)

At will—*time stop* (2d4 rounds between use)

Abilities Str 47, Dex 10, Con 29, Int 30, Wis 37, Cha 30

Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Hover, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Multiattack, Power Attack, Snatch, Weapon Focus (bite, claw, tail slap, wing)

Skills Appraise +57, Decipher Script +57, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +14, Knowledge (all) +57, Listen +60, Search +10 (+14 secret doors), Sense Motive +60, Speak Language (47), Spot +60, Survival +13 (+17 on other planes, +17 underground, +17 avoiding getting lost and hazards, +17 in aboveground natural environments)

Possessions hoard valued at 350,000 gp

Breath Weapon (Su) 100-foot line, once every 1d4+1 rounds, damage age 10 years plus 1 Con or lose 1 hardness (Fort DC 41 half); or 50-foot cone, damage disappear 1 round (Will DC 41 negates).

Crush (Ex) Area 15 ft. by 15 ft.; Small or smaller opponents take 2d8+27 points of bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on a DC 41 Reflex save or be pinned.

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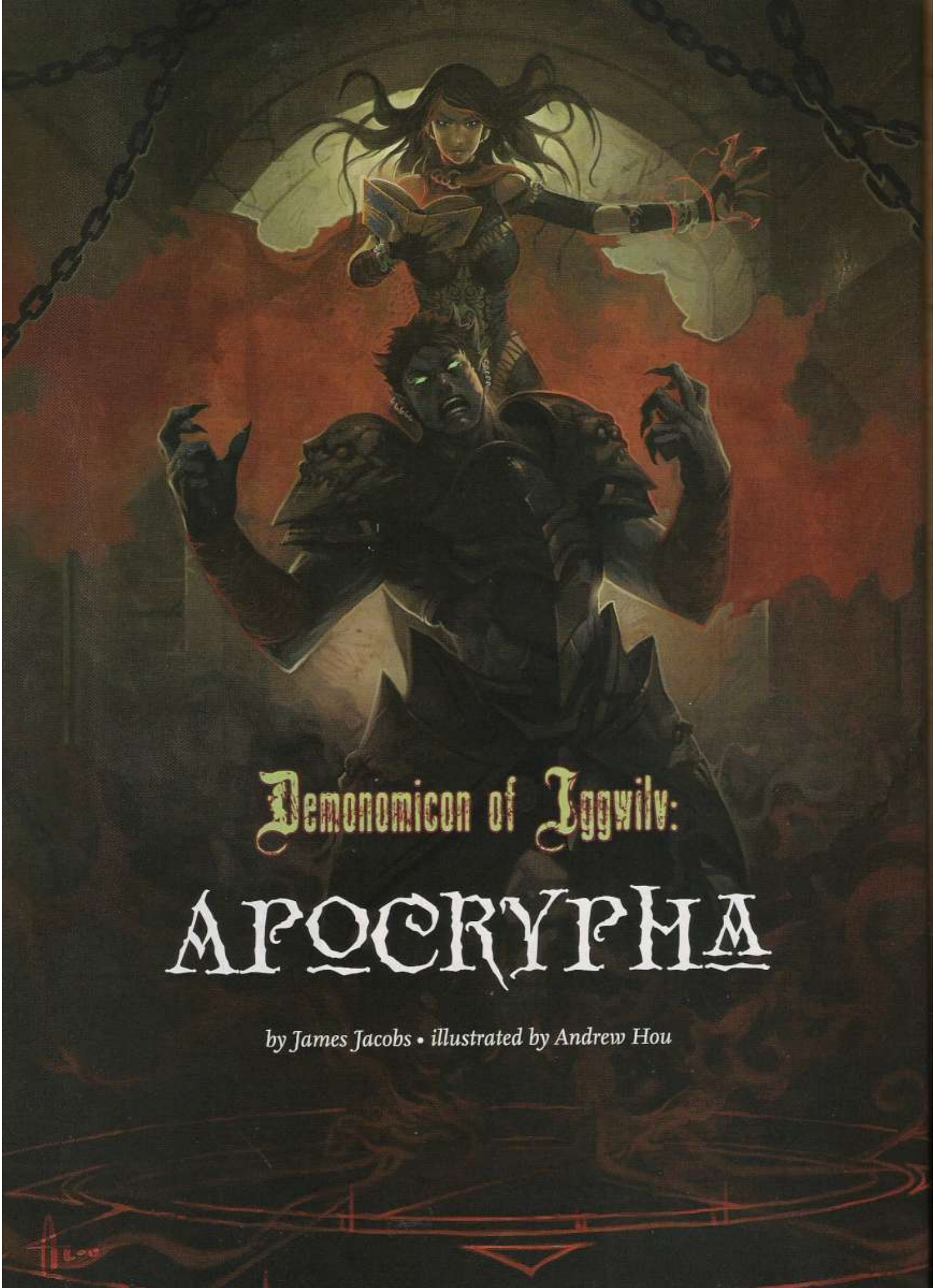

Demonomicon of Iggwilv:

APOCRYPHA

by James Jacobs • illustrated by Andrew Hou

The *Demonomicon of Iggwilv* is a notorious tome, its pages filled with countless secrets penned by one of the world's foremost experts on all things demonic. And yet, for all of the terrible secrets and tales hidden within its blasphemous pages, the contents of the book barely scratch the surface of what the Witch Queen knows about the Abyss. Many of her rough notes never made the transition from hastily scrawled field observations or binges of hideous research, and just as many pages of discoveries realized after she finished the book exist. Due to their exclusion from the *Demonomicon*, many scholars believe these notes weren't even written by Iggwilv herself, but by those who came after and who themselves studied from the book. Just as many argue that the writings could have been penned by none other than the Witch Queen and explain away deviations in writing style and presentation by pointing to the indisputable fact that Iggwilv has many forms. Could not each of these have different writing styles? Yet one thing remains apparent—legitimate notes of the Witch Queen or not: the apocrypha of the *Demonomicon of Iggwilv* contains secrets and revelations just as horrific as those in the infamous book. This article is broken into disparate groupings of such notes: a short treatise on the six categories of demonic life and a discussion of five relatively minor demon lords on the cusp of becoming tomorrow's Graz'zts, Orcuses, or Demogorgons.

The Demonic Race

The *Demonomicon* is generally considered the first source to catalog, for mortal eyes, the various demonic races. While a few scholars possess knowledge of the vague differences between tanar'ri, obyriths, loumaras, and other demons, it wasn't until Iggwilv's work and theories grew in infamy that these categories approached common knowledge in conjurer circles. The *Demonomicon* categorizes demons into six groupings, but makes clear the likelihood that additional demonic races exist in the realms of the Abyss still unseen by mortal eyes.

Loumara: Although the loumara race is ancient by most mortal standards, they remain to the Abyss relatively recent additions to demonkind. All loumaras are immaterial creatures, evil unfettered by the limitations of physical bodies. Most of them possess living creatures or objects in order to more efficiently work their evils on the world. Born from the Abyssal layer known as the Dreaming Gulf, the loumaras resulted from the Abyss's attempt to "digest" the last remaining vestiges of a dead pantheon of gods, cast-off waste products of the dead memories and dreams of several forgotten deities. The *Demonomicon* postulates that each breed of loumara evolved from a different deity, that each is a corruption of a specific god's portfolio. The decadent dybbuks, who possess the bodies of the dead in order to indulge in mortal sins, are believed to have spawned from the remnants of a goddess of love and art. The murderous guecubus likely formed from the nightmares of a god of law and peace. And from the dead echoes of the goddess of fertility and nature come the deadly manitous. Other loumaras doubtless exist in the Dreaming Gulf, but to this point only these three have been encountered with any frequency elsewhere. The dybbuk and the guecubu appear in *Fiendish Codex I*, with the Manitou detailed below.

MANITOU **CR 12**

Always CE Huge Outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, incorporeal, loumara)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +,24 Spot +24

Aura frightful presence (120 ft. range, Will DC 27)

Languages Abyssal, Common; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 22, touch 22, flat-footed 16

hp 172 (15 HD); **DR** 10/good

Immune acid, electricity, fire, incorporeal traits

Resist cold 10; SR 22

Fort +16, **Ref** +15, **Will** +17

Spd fly 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee 6 bites +19 (2d8)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** —

Atk Options Combat Expertise

Special Actions possession, rend nature

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th)

At will—*diminish plants, dominate animal* (DC 21), *entangle* (DC 19), *greater magic fang, hallucinatory terrain* (DC 22), *plant growth, summon nature's ally V, transport via plants*

3/day—*call lightning storm* (DC 23), *control winds*, quickened *entangle* (DC 19), *giant vermin*

1/day—*shambler*

Abilities Str —, Dex 23, Con 24, Int 20, Wis 22, Cha 27
Feats Ability Focus (frightful presence), Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*entangle*)
Skills Concentration +25, Hide +16, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +23, Knowledge (geography) +23, Knowledge (nature) +23, Knowledge (the planes) +23, Listen +24, Search +23, Sense Motive +24, Spellcraft +25, Spot +24, Tumble +24

Environment any wilderness
Organization solitary
Treasure standard
Advancement 16–21 HD (Huge), 22–39 HD (Gargantuan), 40–45 HD (Colossal)

Frightful Presence (Su) A manitou exudes an aura of supernatural fear to a radius of 120 feet. Any creature in this area must make a DC 27 Will save to avoid becoming frightened as long as that creature remains in the area of effect. Animals and fey who fail to resist instead cower in fear as long as they remain in the area of effect. A creature who makes this save is immune to the frightful presence of that particular manitou for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Possession (Su) A manitou can possess any creature of the animal, fey, or plant type. It must enter a square occupied by the creature it wishes to possess. The victim is entitled a DC 27 Will save to resist possession. A single manitou may simultaneously possess multiple targets at once, up to a number equal to its Charisma modifier. *True seeing* reveals a thin, ghostly vine extending from the backs of any creatures so possessed, coiling through the air and linking them together. Manitou-possessed creatures must remain within a mile of each other—a possessed creature that is moved beyond this range is immediately freed of its possession. The save DC is Charisma-based.

A manitou can take on any of the following roles while possessing a creature: ally, controller, or transformer. See *Fiendish Codex I*, page 21, for more information.

Rend Nature (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds, an incoporeal manitou can rend nature. This affects all creatures and plants within the manitou's space. All affected creatures take 10d6 points of damage, as their bodies are torn apart by invisible forces. A successful DC 24 Fortitude save halves the damage. Animals, elementals, fey, and plants in this area instead take 10d10 points of damage and are stunned for 1 round (a successful save halves the damage and negates the stunning effect). Constructs, outsiders, and undead are immune to this effect.

A manitou appears as a horrific tangle of ghostly, thorny vines, each terminating in a jaw of razor-sharp woodlike teeth. When it attacks, these teeth solidify just long enough to rend and tear flesh. A manitou takes particular delight in corrupting sylvan regions and has a singular hunger for dryad souls.

Obyrith: If the tanar'ri embody the evil of the Abyss, the obyriths embody its chaos. Iggwilv goes as far in the *Demonomicon* to suggest that, before mortal life came to be, evil as we know it today didn't exist—that evil and good were both artificial constructions brought about by the introduction of free will by the gods. It is certain that the obyriths existed before the gods, and as such, their forms are hideous and alien—they came from the Age Before Ages, and the multiverse almost seems as if it would like to forget their hideous countenances. Some obyriths have developed humanoid forms, but these seem more like coincidences or cruel attempts at mockery than anything else. The wretched influence of these primal forms can be seen in primitive, basal creatures like insects, spiders, cephalopods, and the like: Iggwilv theorizes that the unnatural fear many people have of these things that flop and crawl stems from a primeval racial memory traceable back to creation, where the gods—already sickened and horrified at what they found alive in the Abyss—accidentally imparted it in the primal soul.

Tanar'ri: The current rulers of the Abyss as a whole, and certainly the most numerous of modern demonkind, the tanar'ri came to be only once the first evil mortal soul arrived in the Abyss—the interaction spontaneously resulting in the first tanar'ri, Demogorgon. More followed, and as the process soon became commonplace on the Abyss, the tanar'ri shape grew more and more stable. Many of the earliest tanar'ri, like Demogorgon, Juiblex, the alkiliths, and the myrmyxicus had few, if any, humanoid aspects. The raw chaos of the Abyss left them primeval and monstrous. Other tanar'ri bear the mark of sibriex alterations and have an almost mechanical aspect to parts of their bodies (such as the hezrou and glabrezu, both of which have half-organic armor plating under their flesh). But the fact that all tanar'ri, in some way or another, have as their genesis the evil of a mortal mind, perhaps makes them the most frightening demons of all.

The Created: Some powerful beings build demons from other demons, or from the raw matter of the Abyss itself. These demons can be constructs (like retrievers), undead (like blood fiends), or even truly living outsiders (like broodswarms), but they aren't spontaneous creations of the Abyss. They are engineered, most often at the whim of a demon lord, but in some cases by powerful mortal spellcasters or outsiders like night hags. Kinds of created demons do not share traits—each is a unique breed in and of itself. Interestingly, Iggwilv counts quasits in this category, theorizing that fiendish wizards created the first quasits to serve as familiars and spies. That quasits do spontaneously form from the Abyss might just indicate that once the Abyss "accepts" a created demon it might adopt them to its unknowing plan. In time, retrievers, blood fiends, and other created demons might begin to spontaneously arise as well.

Beasts: The Abyss periodically disgorges what, in a saner realm, would be counted as beasts of the land. These demons are generally (but not always) relatively unintelligent and serve as wildlife on the Abyss. The skulvyn, abyssal maw, abyssal skulker, and abyssal ravager are excellent examples of demonic beasts.

Servitors: Finally, Iggwilv speaks of the least populous of the demon races—the servitors. This category parallels the created, save that the servitors were built by entities already well-versed in the art of creating life. The gods created servitors as proxies and agents, using the raw matter of the Abyss as their building blocks. The yochlol are perhaps the best-known of these demons, although others certainly exist. When a god moves on or dies, its servitors generally live on as increasingly free-willed entities. Demons like the zovvut and the deathdrinker are good examples of servitor demons who have outlived their creators.

More Demon Lords

The *Demonomicon* mentions numerous minor demon lords as allies or enemies of the better-known demon lords. Five of these rising demonic stars are presented here in brief, providing enough information to incorporate these minor (yet still deadly) demon lords into your campaign.

Creating a Demon Lord

Each of these mini-*Demonomicons* lists "suggested stats" for each demon lord. In order to build as close an approximation as possible for the demon lord in question, simply build the base stat block indicated in each demon lord's entry and then apply the following demon-lord "template." Of course, you can use this template on other stat blocks of your own design to build demon lords of your own that should fit right into the power levels assumed by the *Demonomicon* articles.

Note that several of the adjustments this template makes are left to you to determine—demon lords are unique creatures, and as such can only benefit from a more liberal application of the typical rules for templating monsters.

Type: The creature's type changes to outsider, and he gains the chaotic and evil subtypes. All demon lords are of one of the three known demonic races, and thus the creature gains the loumara, obyrith, or tanar'ri subtype as well, along with all the abilities and traits for that subtype. For obyriths, this means the demon lord gains a Form of Madness. Each of the obyrith lords below have their Form of Madness presented—use these (and the forms of madness possessed by other obyrith lords) as examples for building your own. For further details on the Form of Madness special quality, see *Fiendish Codex I*.

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Hit Dice: The creature's Hit Dice from race and any class levels become d8. The demon lord retains all special abilities granted by any former class levels (including spellcasting), but calculates its base attack and base saving throws using its new Hit Dice totals as an outsider.

Armor Class: A demon lord's Armor Class can vary, but in order to remain a challenge for a creature of its CR score, you should add natural armor bonuses (or in rare cases, deflection bonuses) to the base creature's AC so that its final Armor Class is close (within a few points) to its CR + 20.

Base Attack: A demon lord's base attack bonus equals its number of Hit Dice.

Special Attacks: Feel free to give your new demon lord a unique special attack. For the following five, one unique special attack is provided.

Spell-Like Abilities: All demon lords have the following spell-like abilities in addition to any the base creature possesses:

At will—*astral projection*, *blasphemy* (or *word of chaos* for obyriths), *desecrate*, *detect good*, *detect law*, *greater dispel magic*, *greater teleport*, *plane shift*, *shapechange*, *telekinesis*, *unhallow*, *unholy aura* (or *cloak of chaos* for obyriths), *unholy blight* (or *chaos hammer* for obyriths).

3/day—any one *symbol*.

Each demon lord also possesses two additional at-will spell-like abilities, two additional 3/day abilities, and two additional 1/day abilities. These additional spell-like abilities should be chosen to match the demon lord's "theme." Each of the five demon lords detailed below list additional spell-like abilities.

A demon lord's base caster level for spell-like abilities ranges from CL 20th to 25th, based on the demon lord's overall CR (starting at CL 20th and adding +1 to its CL for every 3 points its CR exceeds 18, to a maximum of CL 25th at CR 33):

Special Qualities: A demon lord gains all the special qualities granted by his demonic race subtype. In addition, all demon lords possess the following special qualities in addition to any the base creature possesses:

Damage Reduction: All demon lords possess DR 20/cold iron, epic, and good.

Spell Resistance: A demon lord's spell resistance is equal to its CR +13.

Telepathy: All demon lords possess telepathy to range of 300 feet (or 100 feet for obyrith lords).

Additional Qualities: Most demon lords possess a few additional special qualities as well. For the five demon lords listed below, two additional special qualities are provided.

Saves: All of a demon lord's saving throws are good saves, based on its total Hit Dice.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +6, Dex +4, Con +6, Int +2, Wis +4, Cha +6. In some cases, adjust these numbers even more to more closely approximate the demon lord's expected power or his theme. Manipulating a demon lord's ability scores is perhaps the best way to adjust his total power level.

Skills: Demon lords gain skill points according to their Hit Dice as if they were outsiders. Their class skills are those the base creature possessed from its race and any class levels it has, but the actual number of skill ranks should be recalculated using the demon lord's outsider Hit Dice.

Feats: Demon lords always have Dark Speech as one of their feats.

Challenge Rating: The *Demonomicon of Iggwilv* series sets the range of Challenge Ratings for demon lords at 24–33. Using this scale, only the reigning prince of demons (currently Demogorgon) should be CR 33, very few should be above CR 30, and no demon lord should be less powerful than CR 22. The vast majority of demon lords are CR 26–29. CRs for each of the five demon lords listed below are included; for brand-new demon lords of your own design, you should compare their strengths to other demon lords who have appeared in this series of articles to set their final CR scores, but a good place to start is to apply a +2 adjustment to the base creature's CR and make further fine-tuning adjustments from there.

ARDAT, THE UNAVOWED — CR 25

Large female three-headed harpy rogue 20 (tanar'ri)

Savage Species 124

Additional Spell-Like Abilities

At will—*confusion, suggestion*

3/day—*antipathy, demand*

1/day—*dominate monster, power word kill*

Additional Immunities mind affecting effects, sonic

Shriek (Su) Each of Ardat's three heads can unleash a blood-chilling shriek as a move action. Once a head shrieks, it may not do so again for 1d4 rounds. All three heads can shriek simultaneously as a full-round action. Each shriek affects all creatures in a 60-foot-radius spread. Ardat's left headed shriek deals 1d6 points of Intelligence drain, her right head deals 1d6 points of Wisdom drain, and her central head deals 1d6 points of Charisma drain. A successful Will save negates the ability drain, but leaves the target shaken for 1d4 rounds nevertheless. A creature that would normally be drained to 0 points in any ability score by this attack is instead left at a score of 1 and is driven permanently insane, such that he sees his allies as his enemies and does everything in his power to murder said allies. This insanity can be cured by *greater restoration, miracle,* or *wish.* This is a sonic, mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) Once per day, Ardat can automatically summon 1d6 succubi or 1d4 vrocks. This ability functions as a 9th-level spell.

Sunder Enchantment (Su) Ardat's touch functions as a *break enchantment* spell (CL 20th), sundering enchantments, transmutations, and curses. If the creature that placed the enchantment, transmutation, or curse that is broken is within 30 feet of Ardat when she sunders that creature's effect, that creature takes 20d6 points of nonlethal damage and is stunned for 1d4 rounds as the backlash of his own magic strikes him. A successful Fortitude save halves this nonlethal damage and negates the stunning. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Ardat's Appearance: Ardat is a 12-foot-tall, three-headed harpy with raven-black wings and feathers. Her left head is that of a beautiful woman, the right of a twisted old crone, and the middle head a typically monstrous fang-jawed harpy.

Ardat's Goals: A relatively minor demon lord, Ardat's current obsession is vengeance against her newest archenemy, Baphomet. The Prince of Beasts betrayed her and several of her Soul Sirens. The Queen of the Harpies has only recently recovered her agents and is plotting an invasion of the Endless Maze.

Ardat's Cult: The vast majority of Ardat's worshipers are harpies, many of whom worship her as a goddess. Some chaotic evil sirens worship her as well, but among humanoids, her cult is nonexistent (excluding the odd and demented loner thralls). Sacrifices to Ardat are lashed to thorny trees, flayed, and left to die of exposure or starvation—during this grueling execution, harpies sing to keep the victim enthralled.

Ardat's Minions: Harpies are Ardat's favored minions, although she also employs all manner of evil fey and succubi at times as well. Her favored cultists are a cabal of half-fiend harpy ranger/bards known as the Soul Sirens.

Ardat's Realm: Ardat does not control a layer of the Abyss. A nomadic demon lord, she and her flock of Soul Sirens drift from realm to realm in search of victims to recruit to her slowly growing army of enthralled minions. Her favored haunts are the Grand Abyss, the Plains of Gallenshu, and the shores of the Scalding Sea, although she's been spotted with increasing frequency on Torremor, causing many to believe she is courting Pazuzu for her budding revenge against Baphomet.

DWIERGUS, THE CHRYSALIS PRINCE — CR 25

Gargantuan 34-HD elite chaos beast

Additional Spell-Like Abilities

At will—*baleful polymorph, nightmare*

3/day—*polymorph any object, temporal stasis*

1/day—*implosion, shades*

Abyssal Cocooning (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds, Dwiergus can expel a clot of silk and flesh at any target within a range of 120 feet. He must make a ranged touch attack to strike his target. If he hits, the sticky stuff begins growing over and into the victim's flesh, inflicting 1d6 points of Dexterity drain per round. Each round, the victim may make a Fortitude save to resist taking damage—if he makes five consecutive successful saves in a row, the stuff dies and the victim is freed. During this period, a *dispel chaos*, *banishment*, or *word of law* spell can "kill" the flesh and silk, causing it to crumble away into ashes. If a victim is reduced to a Dexterity of 0, he becomes completely encased in a chrysalislike tomb. This chrysalis has hardness 30 and 600 hit points, and SR 36 against spells and spell-like abilities that target it. If the chrysalis is destroyed, the victim inside must make a DC 25 Fortitude save or die—if he survives, he may be extracted safely (but still at 0 Dexterity). A victim allowed to remain inside of the chrysalis for 24 hours emerges at the end of that time a half-fiend thrall of Dwiergus, his former personality gone forever. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Demonic Transformation (Su) Dwiergus has the ability to transform chaos beasts into demons. He must make a successful touch attack against the target chaos beast, which must then make a Fortitude saving throw to resist the transformation. The transformation is instantaneous. For standard chaos beasts, Dwiergus may transform them into any demon of CR 8 or less. If he uses this ability on a creature that he himself has transformed into a chaos beast within the last 24 hours, the maximum CR of the new demonic form is equal to the original creature's CR before it was turned into a chaos beast. Demons created in this manner retain no memories of their previous incarnation, although they are aware of the fact that they were transformed into demons by Dwiergus and are compelled to serve the Chrysalis Prince if he so commands them. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Form of Madness (Su) Any creature within 120 feet that observes Dwiergus must make a Will save. Failure indicates the creature thinks he recognizes a part of Dwiergus's form as being identical to part of his own body. He is seized with an irrational but overwhelming urge to cut out the offending part of his body, and unless restrained seeks out a slashing weapon and attacks himself with it, effectively making a coup de grace attempt against himself. If he survives, he may seem normal, but each time he encounters a new creature of his type, there's a 10% chance that he recognizes the taint of Dwiergus in their form. In this case, he attacks that creature for 1d6 rounds, doing everything in his power to kill that creature. If the victim of this assault survives, the character believes he's excised the taint and returns to normal. Finally, each time the insane character wakes from sleeping, he must make a new Will save to resist the urge to try to cut out another part of his own tainted flesh with another coup de grace attempt. This is a mind-affecting effect that does not affect chaotic evil outsiders. This madness is permanent until cured via *heal* or *greater restoration* (both of which require a DC 35 caster level check to succeed) or *miracle* or *wish*. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Dwiergus's Appearance: Dwiergus has no set form, consisting of a house-sized thick soup of swirling demonic arms, legs, heads, wings, tentacles, and other body parts that liquefy as quickly as they reform. Dwiergus sometimes "wears" suits of chitinlike armor in battle—no two of these suits are exactly alike.

Dwiergus's Goals: Dwiergus seems to have few goals beyond a constant drive to convert all life into demonic life—fortunately, he rarely leaves his realm on the Abyss.

Dwiergus's Cult: Dwiergus has no organized cult, although some spellcasters have used him as a weapon against their foes, calling him or his aspect to the Material Plane and unleashing him on enemy fortresses or cities, leaving swaths of demonic life in his wake.

Dwiergus's Minions: Dwiergus has few servants apart from those he transforms from other forms of life, and even these minions tend to have short lifespans—they are invariably absorbed into the Chrysalis Prince's mass after a relatively short period of servitude.

Dwiergus's Realm: Dwiergus dwells upon the melted infinity of the 558th layer of the Abyss, a plastic, ever-shifting realm of living hate and protoplasm called the Fleshforges. Other demon lords have tapped into this realm, creating smaller portal pools in their strongholds to serve as cauldrons in which they can brew new minions—several such pools exist in Demogorgon's city of Lemoriax (where he uses them to create

Lemorian half-fiends, among other monstrous minions). Sibriex obyriths are thought to have been born in this realm's undulant bowels—the demons are certainly the most commonly encountered monsters in this foul-smelling realm of shuddering eternal hunger. Lakes of organic fluid and mountains of twisted bone mock saner landscapes, and at the swirling core floats the Chitin Palace of Dwiergus himself, floating above a perpetual maelstrom at the center of an ocean of molten flesh. Most agree that the Chitin Palace is in fact an organic edifice grown from Dwiergus's body, and that the Chrysalis Prince can control it, or even wears it like a suit of armor, but no one sane enough to be trusted has ever fully investigated this hideous realm enough to return with proof.

LASCER, LORD OF THE SHADOW SHOAL **CR 26**

Large male corrupted human fighter 12/assassin 10 (aquatic, tanar'ri)
Book of Vile Darkness 186

Additional Spell-Like Abilities

At will—*fly*, *water walk*
3/day—*greater invisibility*, *insanity*
1/day—*discern location*, *weird*

Amphibious (Ex) Although Lascer possesses the aquatic subtype, he can survive perpetually on land.

Soul Draining Bite (Su) Lascer has a secondary bite attack (2d6 base damage) that bestows 2 negative levels with each hit. A creature whose negative levels equal his Hit Dice transforms into a blot of shadows and is inhaled by Lascer, affecting him with the effects of a *heal* spell and a *haste* spell (CL 20th). The save DC to remove the negative levels is Constitution-based.

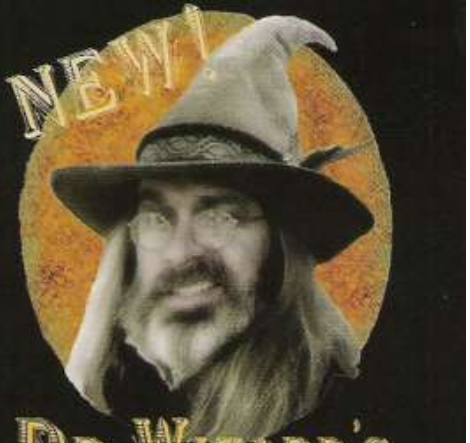
Nightmare Swarm (Su) Up to three times per day as a standard action, Lascer can pull apart his stitched-up ventral wound to release a cloud of nightmarish life. He can direct this cloud to strike at up to three targets within 60 feet; each creature attacked must make a Will save to realize that the nightmares are only partially real. With a success, the target is shaken for 1d6 rounds. If the target fails the Will save, he cowers in fear for 1d4 rounds. Each round this condition persists, he must make a Fortitude save or die from the overwhelming fright. If Lascer ever takes more than 50 points of damage from a single attack, a nightmare swarm is automatically released from his body targeting the nearest three creatures (this counts against his daily limit of three—if he's already used this ability three times, nothing occurs when he takes more than 50 points of damage). This is a mind-affecting, necromantic, fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Unearthly Evasion (Ex) If Lascer makes a successful Reflex save against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, he instead takes no damage. He takes only half damage if the save succeeds. His ability to dodge attacks is so great that attacks directed against him suffer a 50% miss chance if he is aware of the attacking creature, or a 20% miss chance if he's not. Lascer cannot be flanked.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) Once per day, Lascer can automatically summon 1d4 kelvezus (*Monster Manual II*, 60). This ability functions as a 9th-level spell.

Lascer's Appearance: Lascer appears as an emaciated humanoid, 9-feet tall yet weighing barely 140 pounds. His twin rapiers are wired into his hands and shards of broken glass pierce his feet, remnants of his torturous birth at Obox-ob's inhuman hands. His jaw is filled with needle teeth, and an immense wound from gullet to groin has been stitched shut with thick black twine. Now and then, tiny spidery legs slip out between the stitches as the nightmares inside of him probe for release.

Lascer's Goals: Lascer was once human, a planar explorer generally credited with the discovery of Zionyn, the 663rd layer of the Abyss. On his first visit, he



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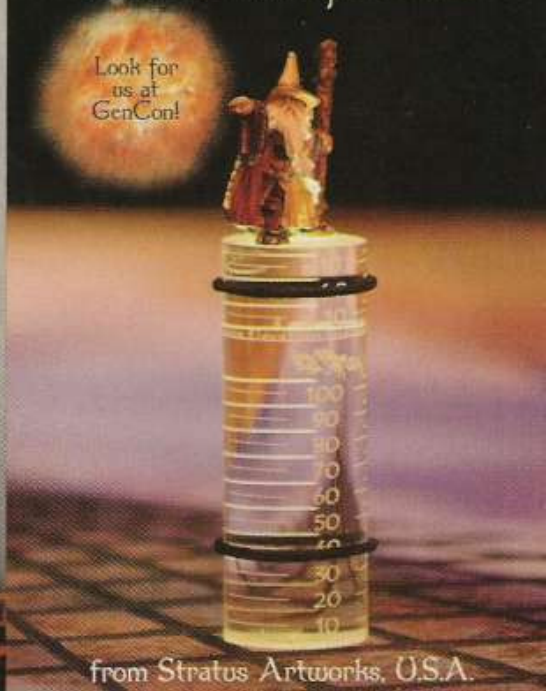


remained for only a few minutes before being forced to flee—it was on his second that he was captured by that region's ruler, Obox-ob. The Prince of Vermin had never seen a human before, but knew what they were. Using horrific methods best left undocumented, Obox-ob transformed Lascer into a minion, forcing a transformation from mortal to tanar'ri. He then sent his puppet out into the Abyss to serve, initially, as a spy—his humanoid form, Obox-ob hoped, would allow him to gather intelligence on the tanar'ri. And for a while, it worked, but eventually the truth of Lascer's origins came out when Graz'zt discovered the obyrith-created tanar'ri in his palace. Since then, Obox-ob has repurposed Lascer into a deadly assassin, one (it is rumored) the obyrith lord is grooming to be a slayer of tanar'ri lords.

Lascer's Cult: Lascer has a small but powerful cult known as the Shadow Shoal, although the powerful assassin leaders of this cult have recently been destroyed and their fortress, an undersea complex called the Coral Citadel, was breached and looted by adventurers. Lascer is in the process of grooming new assassins to rebuild the Shadow Shoal in an unknown location deep under an entirely different ocean. Sacrifices to Lascer are tortured first, forced to walk on broken glass and to have their hands pierced by long lengths of wire before they are vivisected and their entrails eaten by hungry sea spiders, crabs, and lampreys.

Lascer's Minions: Apart from his hand-picked assassin cultists, who are themselves culled from countless worlds, Lascer has few minions. He often uses kelvezu demons on assassination missions that aren't important enough to warrant his personal attention, and his affinity with the deeps see him forging alliances with the sahuagin at times, although the sea devils are generally too regimented for his tastes.

Lascer's Realm: Although "born" on Zionyn, Lascer himself does not rule an Abyssal Layer. Hated by the tanar'ri lords as a traitor and mockery, Obox-ob modified his original incarnation so that Lascer now prefers to dwell in the deepest reaches of the Abyssian Ocean or Shadowsea (where he is rumored to have forged a pact of some sort with Dagon at Obox-ob's urging). Lascer dwells in a mobile fortress constructed of half-living, half-fossilized creatures of the deep, a spine-covered abomination known only as the Seahold. Tales persist that the Seahold can move back and forth from the Abyssian Ocean and the deep oceans of the Material Plane with ease.

SHAKTARI, QUEEN OF MARILITHS CR 28

Gargantuan 30-HD elite marilith (aquatic, tanar'ri)

Additional Spell-Like Abilities Shaktari retains all of her maralith spell-like abilities in addition to those granted from the demon lord template. She also gains the following spell-like abilities:

At will—*fly*

3/day—*haste*, *banishment*

1/day—*freedom*, *imprisonment*

Additional Arms (Ex) Shaktari has eight arms rather than six, allowing her to make an additional two weapon attacks beyond those most maraliths make.

Amphibious (Ex) Although Shaktari possesses the aquatic subtype, she can survive perpetually on land.

Poison (Ex) Any weapon Shaktari wields immediately becomes coated in poison—this applies to her tail slap attack as well. Initial and secondary damage from this poison is 3d6 points of Constitution. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Aura of Toxin (Su) Most creatures within 120 feet of Shaktari automatically lose any immunity to poison they may possess. Constructs, elementals, and undead are unaffected by Shaktari's aura, as are any creatures she chooses to exclude from the effects. *Neutralize poison*, *delay poison*, and any other spell that attempts to prevent a poison effect from taking place do not function within 120 feet of Shaktari.

THE COMPLETE DEMONOMICON

From its first apparence in *S4: The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth* to its reemergence in recent years, much has been written regarding the sinister *Demonomicon of Iggwilv*. Presented here is an index of excepts from its sinister pages.

Demon Lord	Issue
Pazuzu	#329
Fraz-Urb'Luu	#333
Zuggtmoy	#337
Baphomet	#341
Kostchtchie	#345
Dagon	#349
Malcanthet	#353
Demogorgon	#357

In addition, DRAGON #336 features spells directly from the *Demonomicon* and a history of its infamous author, Iggwilv (see page 76). The Witch of Perrenland also plays a crucial role in both Wizards of the Coast's new adventure *Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk* and in the climax of DUNGEON's Savage Tide Adventure Path.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) Once per day, Shaktari can automatically summon 1d6 mariliths. This ability functions as a 9th-level spell.

Shaktari's Appearance: Shaktari appears as a gargantuan marilith with eight arms, black skin, and burning eyes.

Shaktari's Goals: For eons, Shaktari was one of the most active demon lords in the Blood War. Her marilith armies were devastating forces, and their triumphs over the baatezu would have remained legendary if she hadn't been imprisoned in the Wells of Darkness. None know quite how she was trapped, although rumor holds that no fewer than three archdevils forged an unthinkable pact with several of Shaktari's demon lord enemies, and that this tenuous allegiance forced her into imprisonment. Just as mysterious are the events surrounding her release, which are believed to have been engineered by a certain baernoloth eager to see the violence of the Blood War once again escalate. And once Shaktari recovers from her debilitating stay in the Wells of Darkness, just such an escalation seems guarenteed.

Shaktari's Cult: Although Shaktari is still recovering from her imprisonment, her marilith minions remain active as ever on the islands in her Abyssal realm. Only the bitter infighting keeps them from organizing into a powerful force—and once Shaktari returns wholly to strength, they might just do that.

Shaktari's Minions: Shaktari's minions are primarily mariliths, although serpentine monsters like nagas and yuan-ti sometimes venerate her as a god as well.

Shaktari's Realm: Shaktari dwells on the 531st layer of the Abyss, a sweltering realm called Vudra. Everything in this realm is steeped in poison, from its seas of blood to the monstrous tropical plants that grow on the countless islands that dot the realm's primarily aquatic nature. Each of these islands is ruled by a powerful marilith in Shaktari's service, but the Queen herself spends much of her time slumbering at the bottom of the Bloodsea. The River Styx connects to this realm, and Charon and his minions seem to take particular delight in watching ill-prepared passengers arrive in the realm only to die agonizing deaths soon after breathing the poison air.

Vudra is detailed further in DUNGEON #60's "Nemesis," by Christopher Perkins.

UGUDENK, THE SQUIRMING KING — CR 30

Colossal 40 HD purple worm (replace stinger attack with crush attack)

Additional Spell-Like Abilities

At will—*fear, fly*

3/day—*creeping doom, insanity*

1/day—*imprisonment, earthquake*

Breath Weapon (Su) 600-foot line, once every 10 rounds, damage 20d10 acid and knocked prone. A successful Reflex save halves the acid damage and negates the knockdown effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Endless (Su) Ugudenk's body is enormously long, to a scale measured in miles. No being can attest to ever seeing the opposite end of the demon lord's body, prompting the theory that Ugudenk is merely the extension of an undiscovered Abyssal layer. Despite his size, the only part of Ugudenk's body that is capable of fighting is the mouth end—treat this section as a colossal creature, with the remainder of his body burrowed down below sight (and eventually, into its lair in the Writhing Realm). Ugudenk is immune to effects that are limited to creatures of specific size categories or weight (such as *telekinesis*). "Killing" Ugudenk merely results in the temporary destruction of his mouth—even effects like destruction that normally destroy a creature's entire body are only capable of destroying the first 100 or so feet of his length. In such a case, the rest of Ugudenk's body withdraws with lightning speed into the Abyss, where the obyrith lord slowly regenerates back to life. Killing Ugudenk permanently may be impossible as long as the Writhing Realm exists.

Form of Madness (Su) Any creature within 120 feet that observes Ugudenk must make a Will save. Failure indicates the creature realizes Ugudenk could erupt from any earthly surface at any time. As long as the victim is in contact with the ground or any structure attached to the ground, he suffers a –4 penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and initiative checks. On the first round of combat against a creature with a burrow speed, the character must make a Will save or be paralyzed with horror for 1d6 rounds. This is a mind-affecting fear effect that does not affect chaotic evil outsiders. Even creatures that are normally immune to fear can be affected by Ugudenk's form

of madness, although they suffer its effects for only 1 hour if they fail their saving throw—for all other creatures the effect is permanent until cured via *heal* or *greater restoration* (both of which require a DC 35 caster level check to succeed) or *miracle* or *wish*. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Superior Fast Healing (Ex) Ugudenk has fast healing 40. Once "killed," Ugudenk regains hit points at the rate of 40 per month of inactivity in the Writhing Realm—once he returns to positive hit points, his fast healing rate returns to normal.

Ugudenk's Appearance: Ugudenk appears as an impossibly immense worm, its body often trailing so far into the distance that his twitching coils can be seen wrapped around remote mountain peaks. Ugudenk's mouth is a monstrously complex arrangement of jaws and hooked tentacles of muscle that opens like a carnivorous flower when he hungers.

Ugudenk's Goals: Ugudenk's goals are unknown. The obyrith lord seems, for the most part, content to burrow through the cavernous reaches of the Writhing Realm, periodically surfacing in other layers of the Abyss (and rarely, on the Material Plane) to consume objects as varied as titans, castles, lakes, and artifacts. There seems to be no pattern or schedule to what Ugudenk consumes, but stories tell of some scholars who, upon determining the nature of Ugudenk's seemingly random feastings, went mad and took their own lives—invariably by allowing immense monsters to consume them. Ugudenk does seem to have a particular attraction to Hollow's Heart, the Abyssal Layer ruled by Fraz-Urb'luu, although this is likely due to the fact that a permanent portal between their two realms exists at the location known as the Spiral of Ugudenk, one of the few constant and immutable regions in the Prince of Deception's realm. Fraz-Urb'luu's attempts to uproot and remove Ugudenk from his realm are something of a shared joke among the other demon lords, who sometimes refer to Ugudenk as Fraz-Urb'luu's "infestation problem."

Ugudenk's Cult: Ugudenk has no cult, apart from isolated insane maniacs who wish to draw the Squirming King's attention to people or locations that have wronged them.

Ugudenk's Minions: As with his cult, Ugudenk is directly served by few creatures. Wormlike monsters and invertebrate obyriths are common in regions he has appeared in (and sudden uprisings from the ground by such creatures always presage his arrival), but these creatures seem more to be opportunity feeders that follow the obyrith lord's side, hoping for scraps from his table rather than actual minions.

Ugudenk's Realm: Ugudenk's realm is the 177th layer of the Abyss, a place called the Writhing Realm. This entire layer is underground, consisting of endless tunnels and caverns left behind by Ugudenk's endless burrowing. It's not uncommon to encounter coils of the obyrith lord blocking caverns and tunnels here, but his ravenous maw only rarely appears in the Writhing Realm itself. Rumors hold that Ugudenk himself is an Abyssal layer, that his "body" is but a single feeding tendril that extends from this unknown realm into the Abyss through an as-yet undiscovered portal deep within the Writhing Realm.

THAT IS NOT DEAD...

The *Demonomicon of Iggwilv* series of articles was the brainchild of Erik Mona, and I'd like to take a moment to thank him for giving me the opportunity to write them. Erik's a huge fan of all things demonic, and it was an incredible honor to write these articles up, even although, at times, I may have been a little (or a lot) late with the turnover of the text to edit. Sorry guys!

I'd also like to thank DRAGON's readers as well—the reaction to this series of articles has been phenomenal, and is in large part responsible for its continued run over the past several years. Feedback from you on various messageboards has helped shape the direction of the series in more ways than I can count, and always for the better.

And finally, I'd like to thank Gary Gygax for *The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*, without which none of this would have been possible.

1d20 Villains

D&D's Most Wanted; Preferably Dead

by Jason Bulmahn, James Jacobs, Mike McArtor, Erik Mona, F. Wesley Schneider, Todd Stewart, Jeremy Walker • illustrated by John Gravato

Few things have remained relatively unchanged since the early days of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, but one thing has: Artifacts should never be part of a randomly generated treasure hoard. Page 277 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* states, "No table has been included to randomly generate specific artifacts, since these items should only enter a campaign through deliberate choice." That is all fine and good, but no such guideline exists for inserting a major villain (many of whom own artifacts) into your campaign.

Included here are twenty of D&D's coolest, most powerful, and infamous villains, ready to be randomly dropped into your game. In addition to a background, current activities, and source material, each villain includes a sample rules element to add to the villainy. As with all d20 rolls, higher is definitely better—for the DM anyway.

1 MEEPO

Among kobolds, at least, Meepo is a legendary hero.

Origins: When Meepo's tribe captured a wyrmling white dragon his terrible life went from bad to worse! Meepo relished the opportunity to care for it, thinking he might move up in the tribe's hierarchy. Unfortunately, the new job only involved the shoveling of dragon droppings.

Current Activities: Rumors of Meepo's death have been greatly exaggerated. Rather than fall to a band of adventurers, some power apparently whisked Meepo to a distant Material Plane world heavily suffused with technology. In this Oerth-like world, Meepo serves in a guerilla army, wielding an advanced blunderbuss he calls a "pump-action shotgun."

Sources: *Sunless Citadel, d20 Modern Roleplaying Game, D&D Miniatures* War of the Dragon Queen set.

Meepo's "Pump-Action Shotgun"

Minor Artifact

A "pump-action shotgun" is a magical blunderbuss crafted by the famed artificer Mossburg that fires ammunition known as a "12-gauge shotgun shell." It is most effective at short ranges and takes a –1 penalty on damage rolls per range increment of the attack. It can fire six times before it needs reloading (which requires a full-round action), requiring a distinct "pumping" action along the barrel that gives the blunderbuss its distinctive name.

Meepo's "pump-action shotgun" is a *+3 shotgun* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, 146) that deals 2d8+3 points of piercing damage with a ranged increment of 30 feet. It can create six "12-gauge shotgun shells" up to five times per day.

2 LORD OF BLADES

Leader of a band of renegade warforged, the Lord of Blades broods over his next campaign from the heart of the Mournland.

Origins: Prophet or malcontent, myth or menace, the history of the Lord of Blades remains occluded. Some claim he was the last warforged to emerge from a Cannith creation forge, that he led the warforged armies of Cyre, or that he somehow create the Mournland. Another story makes him the same warforged as a Brelish royal advisor who disappeared into the east shortly before reports of the Lord of Blades arose.

Current Activities: Currently, the Lord of Blades gathers a group of warforged followers under his militaristic theocracy. His dictum declares the superiority of the warforged over the flesh creatures who created them. Knowledge of his whereabouts remains frustratingly elusive: his followers remain steadfastly loyal or they are killed.

Sources: *Eberron Campaign Setting, Faiths of Eberron, Player's Guide to Eberron, Dungeon* #111.

Blade Communion of Slashing

You partake of the same flesh-ripping power as the Lord of Blades's blade-covered body.

Prerequisites: Adamantine Body, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, warforged juggernaut, must worship Lord of Blades.

Benefit: Your adamantine armor spikes deal 1d8 points of slashing damage instead of 1d6 points of piercing damage.

Note: In order to gain the benefits of this feat, you must participate in a blade communion ritual (*Faiths of Eberron*, 113).

3 MANSHOON

Although he has lost much in recent years, the power and cunning of this evil archmage are in no way diminished.

Origins: As the founder of the Zhentarim, Manshoon has spent much of his life dealing in treachery, lies, and murder. His career began when he gained control of Zhentil Keep and founded the Black Network to further his influence and control over much of the Moonsea. All of his plans came to an end upon his death in 1370 DR, which in turn activated a host of *clones* and triggered the "Manshoon Wars."

Current Activities: Today, only three of Manshoon's clones remain. While one is a vampire residing in Westgate, another hatches foul plots from the great dungeons of Undermountain. Only one has returned to power with the Zhentarim. Although no longer in control of the Black Network, Manshoon's sinister plans are never far from his thoughts.

Sources: *Cloak and Dagger, Epic Level Handbook, Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting.*

Manshoon's Ring of Duplication

Minor Artifact

When worn, this ring acts as a *ring of wizardry II*. In addition, whenever the wearer casts *mirror image*, the ring doubles the number of images created. Finally, once per week, the ring may be called upon to duplicate any spell as it is being cast by the wearer. This duplicated spell acts just like the wearer had cast the spell again, allowing him to choose different targets if he so desires. Once used in this way, the ring goes dormant for one day and grants no abilities during that time.

4 ELI TOMORAST

The greatest villains are often those who could have been heroes. Eli Tomorast is at his black heart an adventurer, and who better to defeat a group of adventurers than one of their own?

Origins: Eli Tomorast settled into a life of study and debauchery around the fantastic Maure Castle about 40 years ago. The archmage's affiliation with the Seekers, an unscrupulous organization of tomb-robbers and arcane scholars, brought him to the castle, and his explorations of that black basalt edifice of the ancient Suel brought him into direct conflict with Mordenkainen, Bigby, and others.

Current Activities: Tomorast's explorations of the famed Maure Castle keep him rooted firmly in the central Flanaess of Oerth. His machinations range from Leukish and Seltaren in the Duchy of Urnst to the City of Greyhawk, Hardby, and Dyvers, and his role as a prominent Seeker extends his demon-clawed reach across the entire continent.

Sources: *Dungeon* #112, *Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure.*

THE SEEKER'S SIGNET

This simple silver ring adorned with the eight-pointed star of the Seekers is completely invisible from detection by anyone other than another wearer of a Seeker *signet ring*, who is able to see it normally. The ring allows the wearer to use the spell *legend lore* as a standard action once per day.

Moderate divination; CL 10th; Forge Ring, *legend lore*, creator must have 10 ranks in Knowledge (history); Price 28,500.

5 KYUSS

For centuries, adventurers knew Kyuss only as the source of his worm-infested spawn, but he Dark Herald of the Age of Worms stirs...

Origins: More than a thousand years ago, a heretical mystic named Kyuss gathered his cult for an ocean voyage to the shores of a distant jungle continent. There they discovered time-lost plates from an ancient civilization presaging an era of death, decay, and writhing doom called the Age of Worms. Ever since, Kyuss and his undead-loving cult have worked to bring about that terrible time.

Current Activities: Kyuss' machinations led to the creation of the Ebon Triad, a hated secret society of misfits and religious outcasts bent on freeing him from his prison and loosing him upon the world.

Sources: Age of Worms Adventure Path, *Living Greyhawk Journal* #3, *Monster Manual II.*

Wormcrown of Kyuss

Minor Artifact

This ornate green-metal crown features the bas-relief sculptures of hundreds of squirming worms. Kyuss worms within 30 feet of the wearer grow extremely agitated, reaching victims' brains in 2 rounds. Once they reach the brain, the agitated worms deal 2d6 points of Intelligence damage per round. Small, Medium, or Large creatures killed by the agitated worms rise as new spawn of Kyuss two rounds later. Huge or larger creatures killed in this way become normal zombies. All undead created in this manner serve the wearer's whim until he takes off the crown, at which point they become free-willed undead as normal.

6 ARTEMIS ENTRERI

Artemis is the model assassin, cold and brutally efficient.

Origins: For years, Entreri's life has centered on his rivalry with the drow, Drizzt Do'Urden, fueled by the contrast between Entreri's hollow nature and the drow's close collection of friends. Ultimately, he fell into a partnership with Jarlaxle Baenre, the leader of Bregan D'aerthe. Under Jarlaxle's manipulation, Entreri believed that he finally killed Drizzt.

Current Activities: In recent years, Artemis went on to masquerade as an honorable adventurer in Damara, where for a brief period Entreri was unwillingly crowned king. That last act drew the unwelcome attention of King Gareth Dragonsbane and a powerful brotherhood of assassins. In the fallout of those events, Artemis severed his association with Jarlaxle, realizing the extent to which the drow had manipulated him for years, and might finally have come to terms with the person he has become.

Sources: *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting, Villains Lorebook*, "That Curious Sword," *Realms of Shadow* anthology, numerous R.A. Salvatore novels.

Charon's Claw

Minor Artifact

This is a *+4 keen smoking longsword*. *Charon's Claw* is a powerful blade of Netherese origin. Possessed of a powerful and malign intelligence, potentially a bound fiend, the sword is capable of *disintegrating* any wielder it deems unworthy, unless the potential wielder succeeds at a DC 25 Will save. Additionally, the sword possesses a number of unknown, quasi-magical abilities that remain dormant unless within the area of a Netherese mythallar.

7 DRAGOTHA

With his first appearance as a sidenote on the map of *White Plume Mountain*, Dragotha has come to be known as the iconic dracolich.

Origins: Dragotha served Tiamat as a living red dragon some 2,000 years ago. During a mission of destruction to the Material Plane, he happened across an ornate monolith that called to him with supernatural force. The dragon soon learned that the monolith was the prison of a powerful demigod named Kyuss. Kyuss whispered in Dragotha's mind and soon convinced the dragon to agree to a pact, ensuring eternal life for the dragon. When Tiamat learned of the betrayal, she cast down her former servant and slew him without mercy.

Current Activities: Dragotha's current lair is in the Wormcrawl Fissure, where he plots to release his master. His plans are rapidly approaching fruition, and it won't be long before he ushers in the Age of Worms.

Sources: Age of Worms Adventure Path, *Dragon* #134, *Dungeon* #132, *Dungeon* #134, *S2: White Plume Mountain*.

Scale of Dragotha

Minor Artifact

Any living creature who carries one of these scales is immune to energy drain and any negative energy or necromancy effect that bestows negative levels. In addition, any damage the bearer takes from negative energy heals him instead of harming him, just as if he was an undead creature.

A *scale of Dragotha* may be used to cast *sending* 1/day, but may only be used to contact Dragotha.

8 THARIZDUN

In ancient times dwelled a god so evil, so harmful to the multiverse that deities of all alignments bound him away for eternity.

Origins: He is the ultimate doom, the Armageddon trigger, patron to madmen, the hopeless, and the unspeakably vile. His evil transcends law and chaos, reflecting a primal nature that might date back to the Great Wheel's earliest days. Now his lore is scattered, his temples in ruin. But his cult lives on, seething, seeking, sacrificing. They know the return of their dark master is soon at hand.

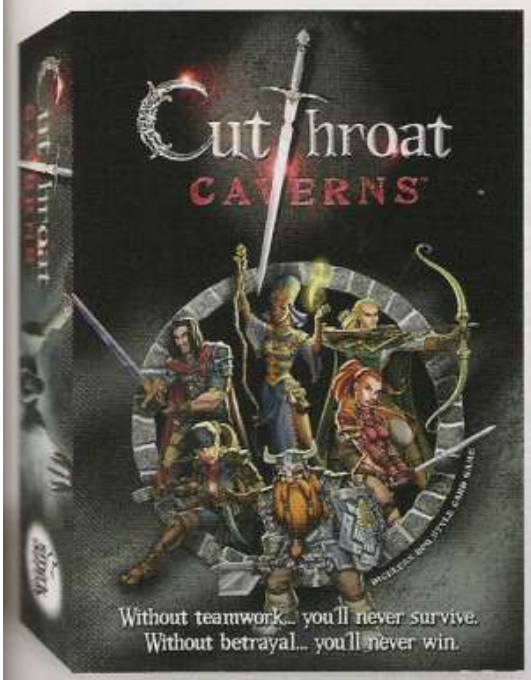
Current Activities: Tharizdun remains isolated from the mortal realm, touching the minds of his debased followers in dreams or bouts of madness.

Sources: *Dragon* #294, *Dragon Annual* #5, *Dungeon* #87, *Forgotten Temple of Tharizdun, Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil.*

Nightforged

A weapon with this special ability was made from black rock quarried in a locale sacred to the god Tharizdun. Such weapons are evil-aligned and bestow one negative level on any good character attempting to wield them. The negative level remains as long as the weapon is in hand. This negative level never results in actual level loss, but it cannot be overcome in any way while the weapon is wielded. Creatures who die with unhealed wounds from a nightforged weapon cannot be brought back from the dead by any means short of a *wish*, *miracle*, or *true resurrection* spell. Bows, crossbows, and slings so crafted bestow the nightforged power upon their ammunition.

Moderate necromancy (evil); CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *slay living*, creator must be evil; Price +1 bonus.



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TRUST NO ONE

9 ECLAVDRA

A famed and powerful priestess of Lolth and the first drow D&D ever named.

Origins: The drow first appeared in *G3: Hall of the Fire Giant King*, where they played the role of puppetmasters behind an army of giants. Eclavdra was one of the initial three drow encountered on the second level of that dungeon (where they hid in a room warded by a *wall of tentacles*). This original drow villainess first rose to power as a cleric of Lolth in the city of Erelhei-Cinlu, where she played a key role in one of D&D's first published campaigns as one of the game's first recurring villains.

Current Activities: After worshiping a nameless Elder Elemental God for a time, Eclavdra has only recently regained her position as one of Lolth's favored and currently functions as the Spider Queen's chief diplomat and the supreme mortal ruler of the multiworld faith.

Sources: *G1–3: Against the Giants, D3: Vault of the Drow, GDQ 1–7: Queen of the Spiders, Expedition to the Demonweb Pits, Drow of the Underdark.*

Wall of Tentacles

Conjuration (Creation)
Level: Cleric 6
This spell functions as *wall of stone* except as noted. The caster and anyone who worships Lolth can freely move through the wall as though it did not exist. Any other creature that touches the wall is attacked by a tentacle that springs from the wall's surface. Each tentacle has a reach of 30 feet, attacks using your base attack bonus (Strength 26), and is treated as a Huge creature. Each tentacle deals 2d6+12 points of damage on a hit, has improved grab, and constricts for 2d6+12 points of damage.

10 ACERERAK

This villain is only outshone by the death-filled dungeon of his creation, the Tomb of Horrors.

Origins: Acererak the Devourer began as an apprentice to Vecna during the lich-lord's rise to power. Legends put his final resting place as a tomb in the Vast Swamp, supposedly filled with unbelievable wealth waiting for heroes to recover. In truth, the tales were a lure, and his deathtrap-studded gauntlet only a portal to his true demesne, the Demiplane of Moil at the edge of the Negative Energy Plane. Acererak planned to use the city for a ritual to elevate him to even greater power.

Current Actitivites: Ultimately, a band of mortals defeated Acererak and disrupted his grand plot. Unfortunately, his destruction was not as complete as some would believe. Acererak's essence was entrapped in the Negative Energy Plane, becoming a vestige, trapped between undeath and oblivion, desperately seeking to return.

Sources: *Return to the Tomb of Horrors, Revised 3.5 Tomb of Horrors* (on **wizards.com**), *Tomb of Horrors, Tome of Magic.*

The Ruby Incisor

Minor Artifact
Worn within a spellcaster's jaw in place of an existing tooth, this powerful necromantic object is modeled after the soul-trapping gemstones that once fit within Acererak's skull. Once per month, it can cast *trap the soul* upon a recently deceased victim. This version of the spell traps the victim's spirit inside the gemstone, where the entrapped soul is devoured over the course of 1d20 + 15 days, its essence funneled to oblivion on the Negative Energy Plane for Acererak's foul purposes.

11 IUZ

Known as Iuz the Evil, or simply as The Old One, Iuz is one of the greatest threats to peace and prosperity in all of Greyhawk.

Origins: Iuz was born from a union between the witch queen Iggwilv and Grazz't. The demigod quickly went on to consolidate power throughout the northern reaches of the Flanaess. After a brief imprisonment in the dungeons of Castle Greyhawk, Iuz returned to set into motion plans to conquer much of the Flanaess. Using various clever ruses, he ignited the Greyhawk Wars, which came to an end only 12 years ago.

Current Activities: Iuz is currently rebuilding his strength from his capital of Dorakaa after the long war. As the road of skulls grows ever longer, many are beginning to wonder if the treaty that ended the Greyhawk Wars might turn out to be another ruse, giving Iuz time to rest before renewing his conquest. Of course, he still covets the Free City of Greyhawk, with dreams of punishing the fools who once imprisoned him.

Sources: *Iuz the Evil, From the Ashes, Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk.*

Road of Skulls

The road leading to Dorakaa is paved with the skulls of Iuz's many enemies, some of which are powerfully enchanted. Iuz's favored clerics carry rods that allow them to activate these enchanted skulls. The following are just some of their powers.

- The skull screams if any good-aligned creature comes within 50 feet.
- The skull can cast *magic missile* up to five times per day (CL 5th).
- The skull can cast *shout* once per day (CL 7th).
- The skull can be commanded to explode as a *fireball* (CL 8th).
- The skull can cast *cause fear* three times per day (CL 5th).

12 GRAZ'ZT

Graz'zt lurks at the infected heart of D&D's most diseased family tree. A vaunted demon prince with the guile of a devil, he commands one of the largest domains in the Infinite Layers of the Abyss.

Origins: Graz'zt rose in the early centuries of the tanar'ri to dominate Azzagrat, a sprawling domain boasting treacherous cities and poisonous forests. A century ago he was bound by the witch-queen Iggwilv, with whom he sired the cambion Iuz. Legends of his eternal enmity for Orcus and Demogorgon have spread to all corners of the Great Wheel.

Current Activities: The Dark Prince wishes to expand his reach by consolidating demonic power under a council he commands. To do this he must undermine the demon-goddess Lolth, one of his greatest and most powerful rivals.

Sources: *Book of Vile Darkness, Expedition to the Demonweb Pits, Fiendish Codex I, Iuz the Evil, Planes of Chaos.*

Spawn of the Dark Prince [Abyssal Heritor]

Your distant kinship with the Dark Prince Graz'zt grants you demonic eloquence.

Prerequisite: Cha 15.

Benefit: As a full-round action you can concentrate upon the gifts of Graz'zt coursing through your veins to gain a +10 bonus on Bluff checks made to convince another of the truth of your words. The duration of this supernatural effect lasts a number of minutes equal to your Charisma bonus.

Special: Your self-absorbed nature makes you ill aware of your immediate surroundings. Consequently, you take a –2 penalty on Spot checks. For more information on Abyssal heritor feats, see page 82 of *Fiendish Codex I: Hordes of the Abyss.*

13 IGGWILV

She is known as the Witch of Perrenland, mother of Iuz, and author of the blasphemous *Demonomicon*.

Origins: Iggwilv served for a time as one of Zagig Yragerne's apprentices. After she absconded with many of Zagig's creations, she penned the infamous *Demonomicon*, and not long thereafter imprisoned the demon lord Graz'zt. She sired the demigod Iuz with him and came to rule much of Perrenland before Graz'zt finally managed to turn against her and imprisoned her on the Abyss. She eventually escaped and launched a new gambit in the Flanaess in an attempt to lead an army of fiends into the world, but she was again defeated. She has since retreated to a hidden lair in the Lower Planes, where she bides her time before attempting her next audacious plan.

Current Activities: Iggwilv has taken note of Demogorgon's activities regarding the savage tide, and she will undoubtedly become involved.

Sources: DRAGON #255, DRAGON #336, DUNGEON #149, *WG6: Isle of the Ape*, *Iuz the Evil*, *S4: The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*.

Blood of the Witch Queen

You are distantly related to Iggwilv by blood. Demons can sense this link and treat you with grudging respect.

Prerequisite: Cha 13.

Benefit: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Charisma-based checks opposed by demons, including the Charisma check required when casting *planar binding* on a demon. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on Will saving throws made against any effect directed at you by a demon.

14 ORCUS

Orcus is perhaps the greatest success story in the depths of the Abyss.

Origins: The Demonlord of the Undead began as a corrupt mortal whose soul congealed on Pazunia as a larvae. Over the next millennium he passed from form to form, ultimately seizing control of the 113th layer of the Abyss. Orcus eventually embraced divinity before his death at Kiaransalee's hands. Returned to life as Tenebrous, an undead shadow of his former self, he hunted for his hidden wand, and on Arborea's third layer he discovered the Last Word. Armed with its power he killed a quartet of gods and planar lords before being consumed.

Current Activities: Within the Abyss, Orcus has returned to his eternal struggle against Graz'zt and Demogorgon. He currently conspires to topple Demogorgon as part of a curious alliance gathered by Iggwilv.

Sources: *Book of Vile Darkness*, *Dead Gods*, DUNGEON #149, DUNGEON #150, *Fiendish Codex I*, *Great Modron March*, *Libris Mortis*, *Throne of Bloodstone*.

THE ORCUSWORD

Minor Artifact

The *orcusword* was his personal weapon during his time as a balor. This *+6 chaotic consumptive burst unholy greatsword's* power is linked to that of its master, granting a divine spellcaster use of the Chaos or Undeath domain and a +5 bonus to his spellcasting ability score. It resides in the fortress of Tchian-Sumere on the Negative Energy Plane under the watch of Alzogra the Bloated and the yugoloth necromancer Yleris, though the latter has the intention of eventually stealing it on behalf of his true master, Bubonix.

15 LORD SOTH

From virtuous knight to damned soul, Lord Soth's tale is one of dishonor, horror, and redemption.

Origins: A victim of jealously, lust, and selfishness, Lord Loren Soth murdered his family but was given a chance to redeem himself and to save all of Kyrnn from impending devastation. He failed in this task and died during the Cataclysm. Living on as a death knight, he eventually became a dark champion of the Dragon Armies during the War of the Lance. As his atrocities mounted, the Dark Powers of Ravenloft enfolded the cursed knight, imprisoning him in a realm of memories and dark hope.

Current Activities: In the forsaken realms of Ravenloft, the brooding darklord rediscovered a part of the man he once was, eventually winning his freedom. When Takhisis called upon the death knight's soul to champion her cause, Lord Soth refused and the incensed goddess slew him. His honor regained, Lord Soth passed on in peace.

Sources: *Dragons of Winter Night, Dragons of a Vanished Moon, Mists of Krynn, When Black Roses Bloom, World of Krynn.*

Undead Legion

Some death knights have the ability to call upon legions of undead servitors.

Undead Legion (Su): As a standard action, once per day, a death knight can summon a number of skeletons with a total number of Hit Dice equal to the death knight's Hit Dice. Thus, a 10 HD death knight with this ability could summon ten 1 HD human warrior skeletons or one 10 HD ettin skeleton, or any combination of skeletons whose full amount of Hit Dice total no more than 10.

CR Adjustment: +1/2.

16 DEMOGORGON

Only one, or perhaps two in this case, can claim the title of Prince of Demons.

Origins: The first of the tanar'ri to spontaneously manifest on the Abyss, Demogorgon's primeval form echoes his ancient genesis—whereas most other tanar'ri have at least a few recognizable human features, Demogorgon is primal and bestial and has none.

Current Activities: Always plotting ruin for his enemies, Demogorgon's current goals involve a mysterious force known as the savage tide—exact details of this complex plot are summarized in the Savage Tide Adventure Path, presented in DUNGEON issues #139 to #150.

Sources: DRAGON #357, DUNGEON #150, *Fiendish Codex I, Book of Vile Darkness*, first edition *Monster Manual*, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS *Immortals Rules, Supplement III: Eldritch Wizardry, Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn.*

Mark of Lemoriax

When a demon becomes inexorably bonded to the servitude of Demogorgon through painful rituals deep in Lemoriax, it emerges changed and transformed.

Prerequisite: Chaotic evil outsider, Thrall to Demon, base Fort save +8.

Benefit: A creature that bears a mark of Lemoriax gains a +4 bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks made against denizens of Gaping Maw, but suffers a –4 penalty on the same checks made against denizens of all other Abyssal Layers. He also gains a +4 bonus on all Intimidate checks. The mark of Lemoriax grants the demon the ability to breathe water and air with equal ease. The demon is scalier or furrier than most of its kind, and his natural armor bonus increases by 1.

17 VECNA

No mortal necromancer has ever attained greater power than Vecna.

Origins: Born centuries ago on the world of Oerth, Vecna became a powerful lich at the end of his lengthy mortal life. Fueled by the powers of undeath, his empire continued to expand, engulfing much of the central Flanaess. All of his plans were cut short when Kas, his vampire lieutenant, betrayed and destroyed him, leaving behind his infamous hand and eye. He then became a demigod and nearly returned to power until being pulled into the mists of Ravenloft. From the Demiplane of Dread, the archlich engineered an escape by subsuming the power of Iuz for a time and attaining true godhood.

Current Activities: Vecna is now a powerful deity whose cult continues to grow. It is rumored that the secretive god wishes to attain even greater power by converting all of Oerth to his vile faith.

Sources: *Die, Vecna Die, Living Greyhawk Gazetteer, Vecna Lives, Vecna Reborn,* DRAGON #348.

Left Ear of Vecna

Minor Artifact

To be used, this artifact must be placed against the left side of a creature's head after its ear has been removed. The ear grants its host a +5 enhancement bonus on all Listen skill checks and a +4 resistance bonus against sonic spells and spell-like abilities. The host can use the spells *blindness/deafness* (deafness only) and *clairaudience/clairvoyance* (clairaudience only) three times each per day. Once per day, the host can use the spell *greater shout*. The host can also understand all spoken languages (as per the spell *tongues*). All powers are at caster level 20th and all DCs to resist their effects are 20.

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LOLTH

There is only one being so powerful as to demand the obeisance of the cruel and traitorous drow. In the deep caves of the Underdark, only Lolth rules supreme.

Origins: Lolth's history is as tangled as the webs that wreath her Demonweb Pits. Some legends claim her as a demon who became a goddess, while others as a goddess who became a demon. The truth is a mixture of both.

Lolth, the Demon Queen of Spiders, was not always known by that title or that name. In fact, the demon-goddess, head of the so-called Dark Seldarine (the drow pantheon) was once known as Araushnee the Weaver, the elven goddess of chaos and destiny, consort to Corellon Larethian. But just as celestials can fall, so too can gods.

Araushnee grew jealous of her husband and discontent with her place within the courts of Arvandor. As the passions of her soul grew darker, she consorted with the lords of the Abyss and they aided her in tapping into her welling damnation, though her fall was free of their goading. Eventually, she attempted to engineer Corellon's death at the hands of several evil gods, but was discovered. Unable to bring himself to destroy her, Corellon stripped her of all but the barest fraction of deific essence and exiled her to join the demons she'd come to resemble.

Cast down and embittered, Lolth laid claim to the 66th layer of the Abyss. From there she usurped the worship of dozens of spiderlike races and seduced her former elven worshipers away from the Seldarine and the light, making them the first drow. Regaining her godhood, she formed a new pantheon, joined by her children Eilistraee and Vhaeraun, who'd been cast from the Seldarine alongside her. Others would join later, such as Zinzerena, Keptolo, Selvetarm, Ghaunadaur, and Kiaransalee the Revenancer.

While her relationship with the fiends of the Abyss has alternated between apathy and open war, the Spider Queen is more comfortable dealing through her millions of drow worshipers. Lacking the same resources and innate connection to the Abyss possessed by the tanar'ri lords, and with the responsibilities of a goddess, Lolth is more concerned with the Material Plane than with the politics and wars of the Abyss.

Beyond answering the prayers of her faithful, Lolth's depredations upon the Material Plane are great, at times rivaling even the world-burning horrors of the archfiends. In fact, more than one world has been conquered by her followers and found itself physically pulled into the Abyss, entrapped in the webs of the 66th layer like an insect wrapped in silk, waiting to be sucked dry—building blocks of her eventual revenge against the Seldarine.

Arachnid of Abyssal Summoning

Minor Artifact

Created during Lolth's early days in the Abyss, when she faced extermination at the hands of Zuggtmoy, these carved spiders possess 1d10 + 5 gemstone eyes inscribed with bebeliths' truenames. Each eye can summon a 24-HD bebilith under the user's control, as if summoned by a *gate* spell, for 24 hours or until the death of the called fiend.

Seeking to expand her power on the Material Plane, Lolth managed to increase her status on several worlds via a prolonged silence, temporarily abandoning her worshipers and feeding upon the resulting strife and chaos. Like a chrysalis-wrapped insect, she emerged stronger than ever on those worlds, possibly setting the stage for similar actions elsewhere throughout the Material Plane.

Current Activities: Lolth has not been silent within the Abyss. Graz'zt recently manipulated her into seeking to broker a peace between a number of abyssal lords which, had it been successful, would have cost a portion of her divinity. It failed, and while it caused Graz'zt no harm, Lolth has had to devote a considerable portion of her power defending the Demonweb Pits against Demogorgon and Zuggtmoy's fury, lest they wrench away control of her layer.

Sources: *Expedition to the Demonweb Pits, Faiths and Pantheons, Fiendish Codex I, Queen of the Demonweb Pits, Queen of the Spiders, The Drow of the Underdark.*

19 TIAMAT

She is known by many names across many worlds, but one constant remains: Tiamat is the mother of all evil dragons.

Origins: Tiamat, the Dragon Queen, is feared and renowned as the creator of chromatic dragons. Her greed and hunger for power have touched innumerable worlds, and her claws sink into the history of dozens of races.

Draconic legend claims that Io, the Ninefold Dragon, created Tiamat and Bahamut. They were not his first creations, however—that title belonged to the flawed, childlike Vorel. Viewing him as a rival for Io's affection, Tiamat slaughtered the godling and framed Bahamut for his death. Io discerned the truth, however, and thereafter Tiamat and Bahamut departed as implacable enemies, beginning the Dragonfall War.

Making her home within the hells, Tiamat found like-minded company with the baatezu. Like the fiends, Tiamat was obsessed with domination, greed, destruction, and fear. As much mother as regent, she views her children as proxy rulers of the Material Plane, individual microcosms of her rightful place within the draconic pantheon and universe.

Proud and haughty, Tiamat acknowledges no allies, but she has extensive dealings with various evil gods and a unique relationship with the baatezu. Begun during Zariel's reign, the status quo remained unchanged after Bel's coup. In exchange for relative autonomy and safe passage through Avernus, the first level of Hell, for her servants and petitioners, Tiamat's deific domain overlaps the main portal between Avernus and Dis.

While some in the diabolic courts mock Tiamat as Bel's scaly watchdog, their relationship is more complex. Tiamat's involvement with various Lords of the First over the millennia has caused many mortals to confuse her with the true lord, much to the fiends' chagrin. In league with Pearza of the Dark Eight, Tiamat created the first abishai, and the pit fiends and nobles Bel grants into her service further anchors their byzantine relationship. Tiamat's most intimate collaboration with the fiends, however, is Mordukhaver the Reaver, the child of her union with Cantrum, the founder of the Dark Eight.

Tiamat's dealings with other races are just as extensive as with the fiends. When the githyanki and githzerai were newly sundered, Gith the Unshackler sought allies for her people. Gith saw a kindred spirit in Tiamat and descended into Avernus to bargain with her. Gith's fate is unknown: she might yet remain in Avernus as a price for Tiamat's concessions or she might have been betrayed by a pact between Vlaakith and Tiamat's consort Ephelomon. Regardless, Gith vanished, and Ephelomon delivered a racial alliance with red dragons to the githyanki, ensuring that another mortal race fell into line with Tiamat's draconic ideals.

Burning Orb of Etiol the Abandoned

Major Artifact

Zariel gifted this chalk-white sphere to Ephelomon's successor, Etiol. Legends claim it was carved from Vorel's astral god-corpse, or that Gith possessed it when she entered Baator. It radiates a sense of loss and rage, and a halo of bleached flame and a low, incomprehensible din of whispers surround its holder. It provides a continual *flame shield*, *mind blank*, and *planar attunement*. In addition, you can cast the following spell-like abilities with it: 2/day—*gate*, *wail of the banshee*.

Current Activities: Currently, Tiamat grows impatient with the Dragonfall War. By divine feat, and likely Pearza's collusion, a large fraction of chromatic dragon eggs now produce Spawn of Tiamat. While these beings lack the power of dragons, they rapidly mature and breed true with disturbing fecundity. Even more frightening, the creatures are gathering with true chromatics and quickly marshaled armies of goblinoids, suggesting that Tiamat might have brokered a deal with Maglubiyet with the intent of scouring the Material Plane of Bahamut's children world by world.

Sources: *Draconomicon*, DRAGON #260, *Monster Mythology*, *On Hallowed Ground*, *Races of the Dragon*, *Fiendish Codex II*.

20 COUNT STRAHD VON ZAROVICH

Ruler of Barovia and master of the notorious Castle Ravenloft, countless ages and infamies have made the name Count Strahd von Zarovich synonymous with both tragedy and terror.

Origins: Strahd von Zarovich once led men as a respected warrior and honored general. After countless victorious campaigns, the aging soldier retired, only to find he had little mind for peace. Strahd instead found his passion rekindled by a prize greater than all he had won in battle: Tatyana, a beauty beyond compare and his brother Sergei's fiancée. Consumed by jealousy and frustrated rage, Strahd made a pact of blood with Death itself. On the night of his brother's wedding, he murdered Sergei with a mind to replace his sibling in Tatyana's grieving arms. The despairing girl spurned Strahd, though, and, quickly gleaning the depths of his betrayal, threw herself from the walls of Castle Ravenloft. At the same moment, strange mists rose and stole both Strahd and his accursed castle from their native realm, transplanting them to a dark nether-realm, laying the foundation for what would become the Demiplane of Dread.

Current Activities: Cursed with immortality, Strahd, the so-called first vampyr, has brooded in his castle-crypt for centuries, ever taunted by the dark powers he feels betrayed him and by the repeatedly resurrected soul of Tatyana, a love he is forced to reunite with and lose eternally.

Sources: *Ravenloft, I Strahd, the Memoirs of a Vampire, Domains of Dread, Expedition to Castle Ravenloft.*

STRAHD'S SKELETAL STEED **CR 4**

Always N Large undead

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +2

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 14
(–1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 32 (5 HD); **DR** 5/bludgeoning

Immune cold, fire, undead traits

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

Resist turn resistance +4

Spd 50 ft.

Melee 2 hooves +4 (1d6+3) and bite +0 (1d4+1)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +9

Atk Options noxious breath

Abilities Str 16, Dex 15, Con —, Int —, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ discorporate

Environment any (Castle Ravenloft)

Organization solitary, pair, or team (4–10)

Treasure none

Advancement 6–12 HD (Large), 13–18 HD (Huge)

Noxious Breath (Ex): 60-foot cone, once every 1d4 rounds (but no more than five times per day), nauseated for 2d4 rounds, Fortitude DC 14 negates. The save DC is Charisma-based

Discorporate (Ex): As a standard action, a skeletal steed can fall apart, becoming nothing more than a pile of bones and dust. While in this form, it gains a +10 bonus on Hide checks but may not move or attack. A skeletal steed may reassemble as a standard action.

Any creature with fewer Hit Dice than a skeletal steed that witnesses it reassembling must make a DC 14 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Creations of the Darklord of Barovia, these undead abominations steal all the noble strength and gallantry from majestic steeds, leaving behind only horrors of dark magic and rattling bones.

A spellcaster of at least 13th level can create a Strahd's skeletal steed with a *create undead* spell.

TREASURES OF GREYHAWK

MAGIC OF THE COMPANY OF SEVEN

by Gary Holian and Rick Miller • illustrated by Jason Engle

The World of Greyhawk is widely respected for its abundant and potent magical creations, but it is even more renowned for its unique personages, the creators of these marvels. As these names escape parted lips, eyes grow bright with wonder: Heward, Keoghtom, Murlynd, Nolzur, Quaal, Tasha, and Zagyg. These names are legend on this and many other worlds.

In the millennium since the Twin Cataclysms felled the ancient empires of Oerth, perhaps no group has been more studied or debated than the one chronicled as the Company of Seven. Without the exploits of these worthies, even the City of Greyhawk itself would be nothing more than a backwater to this day!

The Company of Seven emerged at a time of flux in the Flanaess. Late in the third common century, as the fortunes of the Great Kingdom fell into decline and its once-swollen borders began to contract, a period of upheaval and chaos was given birth. Into this uncertainty stepped a new class of adventurer and fortune seeker unbound by royal writ and imperial proprieties. The most famous of these was undoubtedly Zagig Yragerne, a petty noble and ne'er-do-well from the Central Flanaess. He single-handedly changed the fortunes of a city, and perhaps even a continent, in no small part due to the unique sorcery he mastered.

Two centuries before Mordenkainen and the Citadel of Eight made their names, the young and ambitious Zagig assembled (some say insinuated himself into) a group of like-minded journeyman adventurers based in and around the Wild Coast. These men and women were eager and willful enough to share his desire to explore the

mysterious places of Oerth, uncover some of its best-hidden secrets, and create unique magical treasures. In a wild series of adventures in the early fourth century that took them even beyond the veils of this world, the company succeeded like none before them, gaining untold wealth and knowledge untapped since the time of the godlike ancients.

At the same time the Company of Seven's members forged their reputations, Jonus Marius of Seltaren, an acquaintance and rival of Zagig, formed an organization composed of former royal explorers and surveyors who once served the Overking, known as the Seekers of the Arcane. The Seekers shared many of the same ambitions as the company, but lacked their wherewithal, creativity, and bravado. Instead, they pooled their resources, built private lodges housing laboratories and libraries across the Flanaess, and studiously set about researching and sometimes reproducing the successes of others.

Long before the close of the fourth century, the men and women of the Company parted ways as their interests increasingly diverged. A spat born of an alchemical dispute between Nolzur and Keoghtom became a permanent wedge. Zagig retired to build his greatest legacy, Castle Greyhawk, in which he eventually ensconced himself amid accusations of madness. Others, like Murlynd and Keoghtom, even departed this plane of existence for a time, finding adventure and challenge in strange and alien places. Heward, as always, moved on to the next amusement.

The members of the Company of Seven fashioned countless magic items, from the commonplace to artifacts of great import that still bear their names. So great was their knowledge that they even shed the shackles of their mortality to become deathless, each in his own way. Some believe that members of the company even share companionship with certain gods.

Over the intervening decades, a small coterie of scholars within the Seekers headquartered in Greyhawk observed and recorded their exploits. The creations of the Company of Seven have been cataloged, dissected, and in some cases recreated. The Seekers even coined a phrase for these special individuals that has remained in common parlance among metaphysical scholars to this day: the quasi-deities.

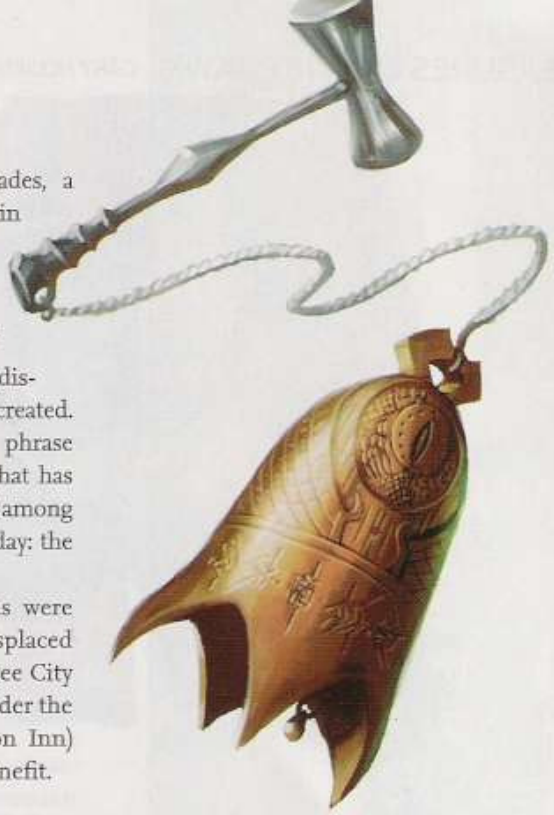
The following magic items were enumerated in a notebook misplaced in a drinking tavern in the Free City of Greyhawk (always check under the benches at the Green Dragon Inn) and are presented for your benefit.

Heward's Bell

Price (Item Level): 37,680 gp (17th)
Body Slot: —
Caster Level: 15th
Aura: strong; (DC 22) abjuration and conjuration
Activation: see below
Weight: 2 lb.

This copper bell bears esoteric runes along its bottom edge, thought to date back to the colleges of the Old Lore. A small silver mallet hangs from a fine silver chain on the interior of the bell.

This bell once hung from the famous mystical organ devised by Heward and was used by the bard to keep time while operating the device. Several decades ago, however, an enterprising thief liberated the bell from the organ while the bard spent a night on the town away from his amazing home (Heward's domicile is thought to travel in time and space, even touching many planes of existence simultaneously, affording Heward the opportunity to acquaint himself with many cultures at once). The loss of the bell did not disturb Heward. Indeed, the pacifistic bon vivant would never conscience violence to effect its return. It has since been copied many times by those interested in the bell's amusing properties.



Three times per day, you may ring the bell to summon an *unseen servant*, as the spell, to do your bidding for 1 hour. In addition, once per day, you may ring the bell twice to send any summoned creature within 60 feet back to its home plane. The creature can attempt a Will save (the DC equals the creature's HD total subtracted from 26) to resist a sudden return to its home plane. Finally, once per day, a bard using the bell to keep time may summon creatures as a *summon monster VI spell* with a successful DC 26 Perform skill check.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *dismissal, summon monster VI, unseen servant,* creator must have 10 ranks in Perform.

Cost to Create: 18,840 gp, 1,508 XP.

Heward's Lyre of Truth

Price (Item Level): 28,280 gp (16th)
Body Slot: —
Caster Level: 8th
Aura: strong; (DC 19) abjuration and conjuration (healing)
Activation: standard
Weight: 4 lb.

This old varnished bronzewood lyre, decorated with several amethysts and strung with platinum wire, bears numerous delicately carved sigils of arcane origin.

A particularly galling tour of the North Province of the Great Kingdom a century ago inspired Heward to create this item to cut through the mendacity he was forced to endure among the boorish nobles he sought to entertain in that region. Thus, he created the *lyre of truth* with the aid of his longtime friend, Keoghtom. Unfortunately, the bard discovered that revels and the gatherings of aristocracy are often the last places for honesty and on more than one occasion his lyre forced him to flee just a few feet ahead of an angry mob. He has since retired the lyre from active use.

When played, the lyre emits a constant *zone of truth* (DC 13). Twice per day, when plucking a single string continuously, you may use a *discern lies* spell on anyone within 60 feet (DC 16). Further, once per day, if you play a tune after adjusting the slacker tension, you gain the benefits of a *glibness* spell.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *discern lies, glibness, zone of truth.*

Cost to Create: 14,140 gp, 1,131 XP.

KEOGHTOM'S SPIDERY MAP

Price (Item Level): 26,400 gp (16th)
Body Slot: —
Caster Level: 11th
Aura: strong; (DC 20) divination
Activation: full-round
Weight: —

This large, weathered bit of cloth appears covered in intermeshing spider's silk. It has been folded many times over and bears an ever-changing nonsensical mass of blurred lines, shapes, and symbols.

Those who study the exploits of the Company of Seven often describe Keoghtom as the most inventive and assiduous of the group. The demigod Zagyg only confides in Keoghtom and respects his judgment greatly. In addition, save only Nolzur, Keoghtom enjoys good terms with the rest of the company and is even accorded a friend of the mage Mordenkainen.

Keoghtom's many discoveries have benefited the cultures of the Flanaess significantly—especially his balms and curatives. The map that bears his name is no exception. Fharlanghn, whose friendship with the bard Heward is long and deep, facilitated its creation by allowing Keoghtom a perusal of the famed Oerthdisc. The resulting map proved so useful that cartographers and sages suggest dozens of copies exist across the Flanaess.

In order to use it, you need only concentrate upon the map, searching your mind for a location, creature, or object. The map then acts as a *find the path* spell, showing in great detail the shortest, most direct physical route to the specified destination. You can only use the map once per day, and all other paths or locations on the map appear as an ever-changing blurred mass of webs.

The map refuses to locate Keoghtom, the path to his extradimensional home, nor indeed the location of any being who carries the rank of deity. It cannot see beyond the bounds of the current plane of existence.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *find the path.*

Cost to Create: 13,200 gp, 1,056 XP.

KEOGHTOM'S STAFF OF PURIFICATION

Price (Item Level): 47,250 gp (17th)
Body Slot: —
Caster Level: 12th
Aura: strong; (DC 21) abjuration and conjuration (healing)
Activation: standard
Weight: 4 lb.

A black-iron hag's hand clutching a lapis lazuli gem tops this thick crooked willow staff.

The exploits of the Company of Seven are too numerous to recount, but one of their more infamous ventures car-

ried Murlynd, Keoghtom, and Nolzur to the Cold Marshes in the far north of the Flanaess in search of the ancient ruins of an odd civilization of sorcery-wielding amphibians. Unfortunately for the trio, the place was not completely abandoned and they found themselves in battle with a witch-queen the locals referred to as the Weird of the Cold Heath. After an enervating battle, Murlynd fired several rounds from his amazing six-shooters at her elbow and her strange gnarled staff fell to the ground. Keoghtom claimed the object and later identified it as a "staff of affliction" which he surmised was related to the vile cult of Incabulos. His study allowed him to reverse its effects, despite objections from Nolzur, who thought it could make a formidable weapon against the forces of a nascent demigod in the northern reaches who the orcs called the Old One. Keoghtom rebuffed him and created the *staff of purification*—which retains its original baleful appearance.

When touched to any liquid, the *staff of purification* immediately removes any lingering maladies, as *purify food or drink* except it doesn't destroy any magical qualities of the liquid. This use expends 2 charges.

The following uses require the expenditure of charges.

- *break enchantment* (1 charge)
- *restoration* (1 charge)
- *heal* (2 charges)

A new staff has 50 charges.

Prerequisites: Craft Staff, *break enchantment, heal, restoration.*

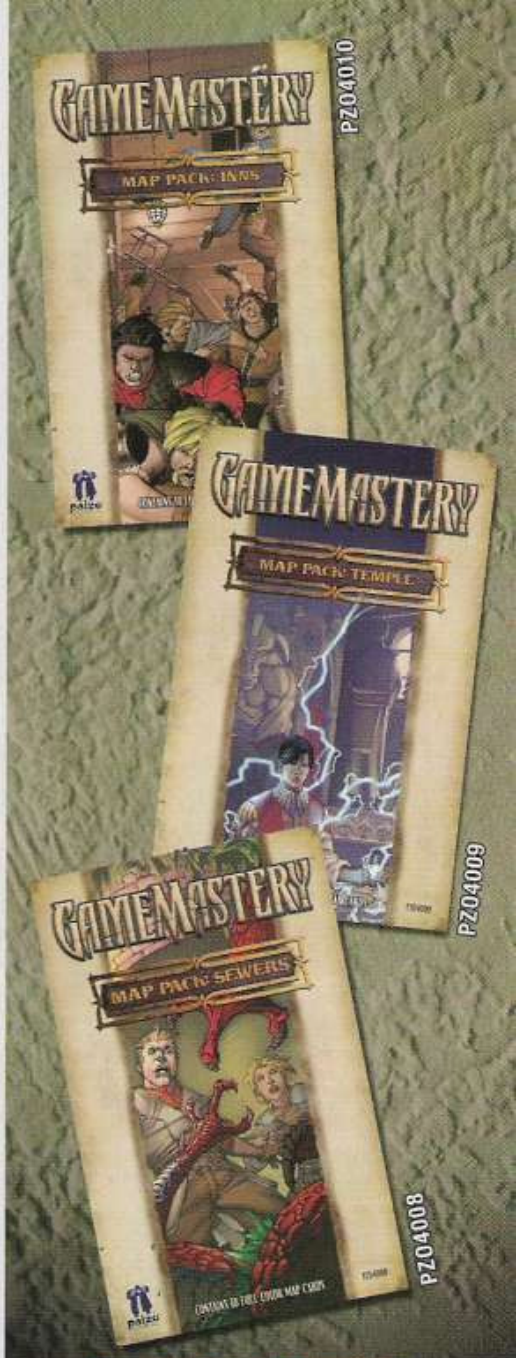
Cost to Create: 26,125 gp, 1,690 XP.

Murlynd's Hat

Price (Item Level): 72,000 gp (19th)
Body Slot: head
Caster Level: 9th
Aura: moderate; (DC 19) transmutation
Activation: move
Weight: 1 lb.

This wide-brimmed leather hat has a tall crown with a crease down the middle. A trio of small gold rings pierces the hat's brim along one side.

Murlynd is perhaps the Company of Seven's most unusual personality, which in a group that includes Zagig Yragerne is quite a boast! Once a mortal paladin of Heironeous, Murlynd has grown into a celebrated personage with a following of paladins of his own. Few scholars of the company know Murlynd is a formidable mage and inventor in his own right. His travels to other worlds have won him knowledge of unique magic items unseen on Oerth, including the leather chapeaux he made famous. Rarely seen without one, on occasion he loses one of his hats to expedience and must craft another. His enemies span many worlds and he always keeps them guessing as to what astonishment might come out of one of his many hats. The following



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example details only one of the hats he wears. The abilities of the others are not widely known.

This hat affords you a +2 insight bonus to Armor Class and on all Will saves made against charms or mind-affecting enchantments. It also allows you to cast *fabricate* three times per day.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *fabricate, foresight,* creator must have 10 ranks in Craft (alchemy).

Cost to Create: 36,000 gp, 2,880 XP.

Murlynd's Rattlesnake Whip

Price (Item Level): 72,301 gp (19th)
Body Slot: —
Caster Level: 9th
Aura: moderate; (DC 19) conjuration and transmutation
Activation: —
Weight: 1 lb.

This rattlesnake-skin whip is tipped with the filed-down fangs of several snakes.

Murlynd did not fashion this weapon, but rather he discovered it on a distant world desperately in need of heroes that he frequents. The whip is a marvel, but because of the six-shooters and fabulous dancing sword he carries it often goes unnoticed. It has, however, saved Murlynd's life on more than one occasion.

The prehensile whip extends at your command to grasp items, operate levers, or pull door handles. It can even lower you as a rope and pulley, but it also has use as an offensive weapon.

This +3 *disarming sweeping whip* grants you a +2 competence bonus on disarm attempts and a +2 competence bonus on Strength checks made to trip an opponent with it. Opponents cannot disarm you of this weapon. In addition, the whip grants you the ability to grapple any target at a range of 10 feet with a successful grapple check.

Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength, web.*

Cost to Create: 36,301 gp, 2,880 XP.

Nolzur's Orb

Price (Item Level): 60,400 gp (18th)
Body Slot: — (held)
Caster Level: 15th
Aura: strong; (DC 22) conjuration and illusion
Activation: standard
Weight: 1 lb.

This crystal orb, awash with a swirl of colors at its center, bears a crack along one side. The colors within seem to leak out, like paint.

Nolzur of Radigast City became a famed illusionist and alchemist as a member of the Company of Seven, but his legacy is often overshadowed by those of his compatriots. Nolzur and Keoghtom fell out more than a century ago, as the latter reputedly borrowed one of Nolzur's formulas to aid in his creation of the celebrated ointment that bears his name. Nolzur has yet to forgive him and his reclusion has caused his fame to fade over time. Few know that he began life as a thief or that his early travels took him far and wide, including to Blackmoor and the Pirate Isles of the Densac Gulf. He is most famous for the magical pigments that he developed, but he has numerous creations to his name, including this silvery sphere.

Nolzur's orb continually seeps oily paints that act as *Nolzur's marvelous pigments* 1/day. The paints issuing from the orb may also be used in creating elaborate guises, granting you a +10 competence bonus on all Disguise checks for up to 30 minutes, so long as the paints remain dry. Finally, you can fling the paints 1/day to create a *prismatic spray* with a range of 60 feet.

If the paints are stored in any other device or container they lose all properties except those normally bestowed by *Nolzur's marvelous pigments.*

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise self, major creation, prismatic spray.*

Cost to Create: 30,200 gp, 2,416 XP.

Quaal's Cloak

Price (Item Level): 29,200 gp (16th)
Body Slot: shoulders
Caster Level: 12th
Aura: strong; (DC 21) conjuration
Activation: standard
Weight: 1 lb.

This snow-white feathered half-cloak appears to be losing the feathers that cover its leathery underlayer.

Quaal is a ranger of Flan descent who originated in the north with the woodsmen of the Vesve Forest. He fought alongside the paladin Murlynd as an early member of the Company of Seven, but he soon tired of the company's travels and esoteric self-indulgences and returned to Oerth to defend the Wolf Nomads and Rovers from the depredations of Blackmoor. He eventually returned to his homeland, where he organized a society of rangers and constructed the town of Quaalsten.

Quaal devised this cloak for himself. As he withdrew from active life, he granted copies of it to rangers and swanmays who earned his favor through their efforts against the tide of darkness that has swept over the north in the last two centuries.

This cloak continually protects its wearer with a *feather fall* spell. In addition, any feather removed from the cloak acts as a *Quaal's feather token*. Each feather removed in this fashion drains one charge from the cloak.

The cloak begins with 50 charges.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *feather fall, major creation.*

Cost to Create: 14,600 gp, 1,168 XP.

Quaal's Surreptitious Armor of Expedience

Price (Item Level): 65,250 gp
Body Slot: torso
Caster Level: 12th
Aura: strong; (DC 21) transmutation
Activation: standard
Weight: 12.5 lb.

Dark feathers and a rabbit's foot hanging near the waist adorn this mithral rune-etched chain shirt.

Quaal learned the craft of magic late in his career, but he never lost the desire to draw his sword and enter the fray. To maximize his mobility and to cast spells in melee he crafted this piece of armor.

This *+4 twilight mobility mithral chain shirt* (+8 armor bonus; armor check penalty of –1) completely negates its arcane spell failure chance. Mithral and the twilight ability of this armor reduces its armor check penalty to 0%, while the mobility ability grants you the benefit of the Mobility feat even if you do not meet the prerequisite. In addition, you gain the ability to cast *fly* and *longstrider* as spell-like abilities once each per day.

Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *cat's grace, fly, longstrider.*

Cost to Create: 33,250 gp, 2,560 XP.

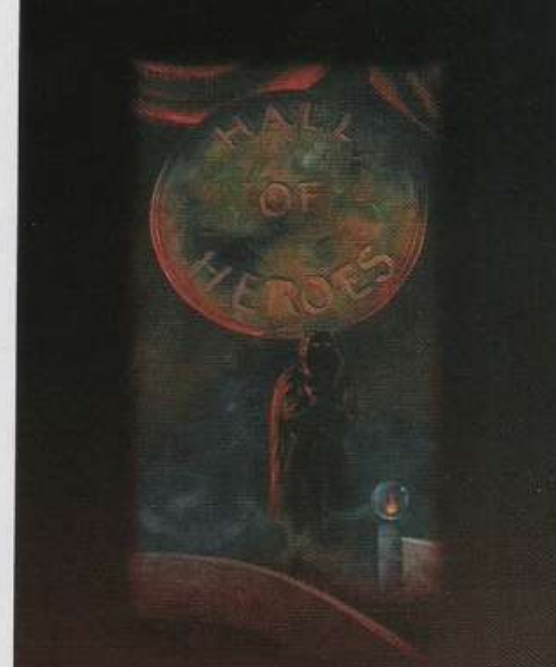
Robe of the Mad Archmage

Price (Item Level): — (minor artifact)
Body Slot: torso
Caster Level: 20th
Aura: strong; (DC 25) divination, transmutation
Activation: move
Weight: 1 lb.

This plain dark gray robe, trimmed in silver embroidered sigils, bears no other decoration or imagery.

This robe was once the possession of the Grey Savant, reputedly a mystic theurge of Boccob who supervised the Academy of Art and Science of Greyhawk. Upon his death, the school was renamed the Grey College in his honor and his magical robe passed to his star pupil, Zagig Yragerne.

The *robe of the mad archmage* is an intelligent *robe of blending* that also grants a +2 bonus on rolls to defeat a creature's spell resistance and a +5 insight bonus to your Armor Class and on all saving throws. Three times per day, you may cast a quickened spell of up to 9th level without increasing the spell level or your casting time. Spells already prepared or affected by a metamagic feat may not be quickened in this fashion. Finally, you may store up to 10 spell



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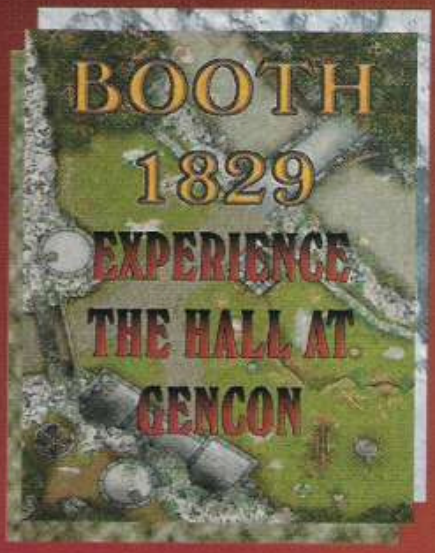


TAKE YOUR PLACE
IN THE
HALL OF HEROES
THIS AUGUST

levels of spells in the robe, as a *ring of spell storing*.

The *robe of the mad archmage's* ability scores are Intelligence 18, Wisdom 10, and Charisma 18. It can speak Abyssal, Ancient Suloise, Celestial, Common, Draconic, and Flan, and it can also communicate telepathically. It can see (with darkvision) and hear up to 120 feet; it also has blindsense with a range of 120 feet.

A personality conflict occurs any time you attempt to remove the robe to don another magical garment. The *robe of the mad archmage's* alignment is chaotic neutral, and its primary emotion is a curious longing, typically directed at magical treasure or arcane lore.

TASHA'S GRINNING IDOL

Price (Item Level): 28,000 gp (16th)
Body Slot: —
Caster Level: 9th
Aura: moderate; (DC 19) enchantment
Activation: —
Weight: —

This plain gray idol attached to a platinum chain bears the likeness of a human woman with a disarming smirk painted red.

Little is known about the most mysterious member of the Company of Seven. Also the only female member, Tasha was rumored to be a beautiful but somewhat capricious woman who, for a brief time, might have even been the Mad Archmage's protégé. This was certainly her gateway into the Company of Seven, and while only Heward and Zagig appreciated her morbid sense of humor, she was nonetheless a skilled mage who created numerous spells and items, such as the idol that bears her name. The idol grants you a +10 competence bonus on all Bluff and Diplomacy checks. In addition, you gain a +2 bonus to the DC of all enchantment spells you cast.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), *charm person*, creator must have 10 ranks in Diplomacy.

Cost to Create: 14,000 gp, 1,120 XP.

YRAGERNE SIGNET

Price (Item Level): 15,200 gp (14th)
Body Slot: fingers
Caster Level: 7th
Aura: strong; (DC 21) abjuration and necromancy
Activation: move
Weight: —

This oversized ancient golden ring bears the silver hawk crest of the Yragerne family line on its large flat top.

Following the death of his father, Ganz, this ring supposedly passed on to Zagig when he became Landgraf of the Selintan. At the time, though, he had such an unheralded reputation that only his subsequent fame and fortune won him mayoralty of the city. Zagig wore the signet for a considerable time, but legends record that it was buried with his father after Zagig achieved godhood. When Castle Greyhawk unexpectedly became open to adventurers in the mid 550s CY, the ring was shortly thereafter lost or stolen. Local legends hold that it remains lost in the Mistmarsh to this day. Lord Robilar placed a bounty of 50,000 gold orbs on the retrieval of this ring.

By rights, the wearer of this ring could be recognized as the highest-ranking noble in the Free City, perhaps answering only to the Directing Oligarchy itself. Certain ancient stone portals sprinkled around various old building in the Free City appear to have locks shaped exactly like the carving on this signet and have proved otherwise impossible to open.

The *Yragerne signet* provides continuous *protection from evil* and *protection from good* effects. Further, once per day you can spin the ring face-down to activate a *death ward* effect.

Prerequisites: Forge Ring, *death ward*, *protection from evil*, *protection from good*.

Cost to Create: 7,600 gp, 608 XP.

EXPEDITION TO THE RUINS OF GREYHAWK

The magic items presented in this article can be easily used as part of the *Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk*. If your party is running a bit low on treasure or could use an extra boost before engaging the final chapters, any one of these magic items might greatly improve their chances. *Keoghtom's spidery map* in particular might be a great help to parties lost in the depths or unsure of their next course. Although these magic items might be added to any treasure cache or encounter, the best location is in area J4. Gallery of Wonder, among the assorted trophies of the Company of Seven.

Rule Ye Firste:
No Throwing Food

Goodbye and Hello, As Always

One Last Evening With The Wizards Three

by Ed Greenwood • illustrated by James Zhang

The armor was a lot tighter than I remembered, even with pieces left off and leather thongs straining across the gaps between other pieces.

Nor were the china cabinet and I friends anymore.

In the end, I gave up. This time it was going to have to be the "broken ceiling fixture" ploy. Shut off the power, lift the panel in the floor of the room above, tie off the wiring, unscrew the ornamental center metal dome that existed to conceal those wires and their connections, and replace it with a old mesh kitchen strainer, backed by an even older scrap of black silk. The result looked like one of my older fencing masks.

Yes, I was going to spend the entire evening lying on a bedroom floor, with my head stuck down out of the ceiling above the food-laden table that three powerful wizards were sitting around, fervently hoping I wouldn't sneeze.

The things I do for my fellow gamers...

I stocked the house with everything I could remember hungry wizards liking, from pistachios to chocolate-coated marzipan, smoked oysters and salmon to a refrigerator full of already-prepared piná coladas and stranger drinks. Both freezers were stuffed with pizzas, moose stews, enough flavors of ice cream to stock many stores, hearty casseroles, won ton soup by the tureen, and chocolate coatings on more things than I could count. Various coolers held shrimp rings and sauce bottles galore, bathtubs were full of beer and ice, and my wine cellar was freshly invigorated. I dragged in extra chairs, footstools, and cushions and laid a fire with extra firewood ready at hand.

Oh, and I'd remembered the requested chocolate fountain. And the little hand-lettered sign: "Rule Ye Firste: No Throwing Food."

Everything was ready, even towels to wipe the sweat off my face as I lay in hiding. All that was missing was three wizards shooting the breeze in my—

The fire caught with a whoomph and Elminster sat at ease in the best armchair, booted feet up, grinning at me.

"Clever!" he said, and waggled his fingertips. Without any electricity flowing through them, the light bulbs around my face came on, shining their usual merry shine, and my hastily-scrawled "Overhead Light Broken. Sorry!" note promptly disappeared from the table.

"Never tempt a wizard with the challenge of fixing something," the Old Mage murmured. "Not unless ye want thy house reduced to ashes."

Whatever he might have said next was lost forever in his sudden, startled, "Gleeep!"

Which, I then discovered, is the sound mighty archmages make when less powerful but far more shapely female mages appear out of thin air inches above them, reclining gracefully in anticipation of settling into the very same armchair—and fall into their laps.

Hard.

Rautheene's startled shriek was far more ear-splitting, and she kicked and flailed her arms about in frantic futility that would have been far more amusing—especially after Elminster sought to buck her off by repeatedly thrusting his pelvis sharply upwards—if she hadn't had the power to blast my house to bits in an instant.

"My! Have you taken to furnishing these gatherings with pleasure-wenches in my absence?" a sardonic voice asked.

It was a voice I hadn't heard for a long time—a voice that made Elminster stiffen and Rautheene freeze in his lap with a gasp.

Dalamar sat in the dark-red highbacked chair in the corner, looking wearier and wiser than when I'd seen him last. His voice was as sharp-edged as ever, but his smile seemed to hold more genuine mirth and less sneering than I remembered.

"Ye survived!" The Old Mage sounded genuinely pleased (if a little muffled). "Dalamar, mightiest mage of Krynn, let me introduce—"

"Elminster," Mordenkainen asked pointedly, fading into view beside the crackling fire; "might I ask what you're busily doing to my apprentice?"

"Serving her—uhh!—as a seat-cushion," the Old Mage replied rather testily, as Rautheene, face flaming, gained her feet and stalked away from the armchair. "Not that my gallantry forbids her presence, mind. I was just... unprepared."

"Oh? I've heard differently," the archwizard of Greyhawk told the table meaningfully, as he pounced on some food (and then, warming up to the process, a lot more food). "Often, and from seeming legions of females."

"Ye listen to legions of females? And believe them all?"

"That," Rautheene snapped, eyes flashing, "sounds like a blatant, completely indefensible sexist remark."

Elminster rolled his eyes. "Lass, lass," he growled, "I was thinking of the time necessary to listen to legions of any sort of folk. Not to mention the impossibility of placing credence in them all, when they inevitably contradict each other so thoroughly and often."

"Suuuure you were, Old Goat! Sure you were!"

"Lady, ye stand in imminent peril of falling into the deep sarcasm that stretches between us. And plummeting—screaming, mind ye—a long, long way."

"You'd like that, wouldn't you?"

"Gods, little fishes, and spells to turn the one into the other!" Mordenkainen sighed. "It's started already!"

"I knew there was something I'd missed from these little gatherings," Dalamar observed sardonically, scooping a handful of olives into his mouth and washing them down with a dozen of my pre-poured martinis. "I think I like you, wench. By taking it yourself, you're saving me from the role of being browbeaten by two towering old breakwinds of mages!"

"Wench?" Rautheene squeaked, her voice rising like a siren as it went on. "Wench? WENCH?"

"Is there something wrong with her hearing?" the dark elf asked the room at large, nibbling on sharp old cheddar cheese and reaching for the bottles of wine behind it. "Or her wits?"

"I think it's her volume control," Mordenkainen offered helpfully. "I never could find them, on ladies. Perhaps if you twist—"

Elminster winced, waved his fingers in a way that left a swift-fading flourish of sparks, and Rautheene abruptly vanished from where she stood storming, and reappeared, blinking in astonishment, in the armchair where Elminster had been lounging.

He now stood where she had been a moment earlier, looking thoughtful—as the objects of his concentration glided smoothly up to float at her fingertips: a dish of white chocolates, a root beer and butter pecan ice cream float, and a gently-steaming plate of tiny sausage rolls wrapped in spicy bacon.

The fires in Rautheene's eyes faltered, her mouth opened in hungry longing, and she reached out...

"The way to a woman's heart—" Elminster murmured gently.

Mordenkainen wagged a warning finger. "Don't. Just... don't say it."

Dalamar lofted his eyebrows. "Prudence? In the Lord Mage of Greyhawk?"

"Lack of prudence?" Mordenkainen replied, in precise mimicry of the dark elf's tone. "In anyone having anything to do with the Tower of High Sorcery?"

Dalamar paled, anger kindling in his eyes.

"Easy, now," Elminster said wearily. "Easy. There's food in plenty for everyone, and all of us have edges to our egos as sharp as any sword. Let us relax, devour these superb viands, and set aside strife for a time. The chance to do so should itself be precious, and this should be a refuge for us all."

"Agreed, Elminster, and wholeheartedly," Mordenkainen said quietly. "Yet how dare any of us relax, when our every word is recorded? And a great and staring eye regarding our every swallow, sneer, and nose-fingering?"

In the sudden tense silence that fell on the heel of those words, I froze, ice settling around my heart... and Elminster looked none too happy, either.

"What mean ye, Mordenkainen?" the Old Mage asked gently. "Speak plainly. Recorded? An eye staring at us?"

Mordenkainen leveled a long, accusative pointing finger. Not up at me, but across the length of the room, past the strapped-together suit of armor, at... the large black rectangle of my old television set. Which was off.

"On my visits to this world, my eyes have been open," the archwizard of Greyhawk said menacingly, "and I have seen, and remembered. Is that not what folk here call a 'camera,' that later shows 'movies' of what it's seen?"

"Oh," Elminster said dismissively. "No, no, no. Trust me."

Dalamar chuckled. "Now that's a reassuring sentence. No, Elminster of Shadowdale, I will not trust you. Not without proof."

"That I shall forthwith produce," the Old Mage promised mildly, "if all of ye will hold back thy blasting magics for a moment or three, and allow me—?"

Three heads nodded, mouths busy with fine food and drink, and Elminster turned and crooked a finger.

The television's remote control rose from atop it and floated across the room to Mordenkainen, bobbing slowly, upright and almost jaunty. The Old Mage was taking care to make its approach seem whimsical, not the arc of any sort of striking weapon.

The archwizard of Greyhawk eyed it warily as it glided to a halt in front of him, its array of buttons turned toward him. "One button is red—the hue of warning hereabouts, yes?—and bears the label 'Power.' They're none too subtle in this world, are they?"

"Nay, that's not a failing they ever seem guilty of," Elminster agreed. "Press that button, with the top of the control" (he gestured to indicate which end of the floating thing was its 'top') "pointed toward yon black glass. A picture will appear, and probably loud sounds."

Mordenkainen waggled his fingers, and a celery stick rose from the heart of a sour cream, onion, and

three-cheese dip, glided gently to the control, and nudged the red button.

The television burst into life, presenting a sudden scene of a basketball game in full swing, sneakers squeaking as long-limbed, fast men raced across the screen.

"See?" Elminster said firmly. "The floor beneath them is polished wood, the lightning bright, the chamber very large—see all the people seated watching? This is not the room we're sitting in, but a window into elsewhere, like a *scrying* spell. Ye are not staring at a camera, but rather—"

"Yes, yes," Dalamar agreed impatiently, staring in fascination at the screen. "What is this, that we're watching?"

"Aye!" Mordenkainen agreed, obviously less entranced than the dark elf. "What by the Broken Circle is that?"

"Basketball. Yet another sport—remember when I tried to explain hockey, and ye wondered how anyone could be so stupid as to force the warriors to wear their swordblades on their feet?—invented as something to do during winters that doesn't involve making babies. This one concerns ye and some friends running around a room and hurling a ball through a basket. While another team tries to stop you, and hurl that same ball through their basket."

Rautheene rolled her eyes. "Why this mania for hurling balls everywhere? And no, before either of you seek to spout lascivious responses, I'm not trying to be ribald."

"They have to use balls," Elminster said mildly. "They long ago ran out of their supplies of the severed heads of vanquished foes."

"Why not just use the hockey things—'pucks,' weren't they?—or the rocks they slide around in that curling game? I know, I know, they didn't have rubber disks or glossy round stones with handles when they started those games. But they had to have been using something; what?"

"Frozen cow pats," Elminster explained serenely.

Mordenkainen tendered a momentary cold stare across the table. "You have spent too much time poking around this stinking backwater. Far too much time. Are the women here particularly ardent?"

"Yes," Elminster replied, just as serenely as before, scooping a handful of macadamia nuts into his hand and surveying them critically before starting to munch.

Rautheene rolled her eyes again.

"How can the women of this place be so ardently alluring," Dalamar asked a little later, waving at the still-laden table as he leaned back with a contented sigh that turned into a belch, "when they must be so confounded fat? If they all eat like this, all the time, they must be as large in the bellies as giant boar! Or cows from the most lush fields, or wyverns bulging before they give birth..."

"Not being dullards, we do in fact comprehend your concept," Rautheene told him icily, daintily licking her fingers clean after reducing a bowl of chicken wings to bared bones. "There's no need to expound upon it at such length."

"I must confess," Elminster said hastily, before another dispute could erupt, "that not every inhabitant of this world eats so handsomely. These, ah, offerings are prepared for us by a man who dwells here because he feels deeply honored by our presence, and desires us to take our ease and find contentment."

"Deeply honored; does he, now?" Rautheene asked softly, her eyes narrowing in suspicion. "Is he hiding here in the room with us? Using magic, perhaps?"

"No," Elminster said firmly, "to both your questions. He is not in this room at this time, he isn't using magic, and in fact has no talent for the use of magic."

"Then why does he feed us so handsomely? Is he looking to gain some hold over us? Is he so stupid as to believe he can drug or poison us? Or is he looking for our service, as a sort of favor or repayment?"

"Nay, nay, none of those things. He craves entertainment. And for him, hearing—from me—some paltry explanations of what we spoke of is entertainment enough."

"Ah, so he's a fawning courtier!" Mordenkainen said delightedly. "A 'fan,' they call it here, right?" He waggled his fingers and the television went dark.

"He is," Elminster agreed gravely. "Although perhaps now is the right time to tell thee he writes down accounts of our converse, and has them printed in a publication famous in this world, hight 'DRAGON.'"

Mordenkainen's frown was as sudden as it was dark. "In a dragon? Why would anyone be so lightning-blasted-wits as to do that? How does he write it, anyway? Tracing letters of blood or bile on the wyrm's spleen or scales? And how does the dragon feel about it?"

"Probably none too pleased, if someone guts it and spreads its innards out for all to read," Rautheene murmured, and then made a face. "The flies. The maggots."

"I hardly think," Dalamar said archly, "even the crazed humans of this world will appreciate being called maggots. That term seems to have a widespread capacity to annoy."

Mordenkainen stood. "So this unseen scribe feeds us royally and writes about us, lo these years?"

"Aye," Elminster replied cautiously.

"Has he shown off our brilliance properly?"

"He has," the Old Mage confirmed eagerly.

"Then he may live," Mordenkainen said grandly—and vanished.

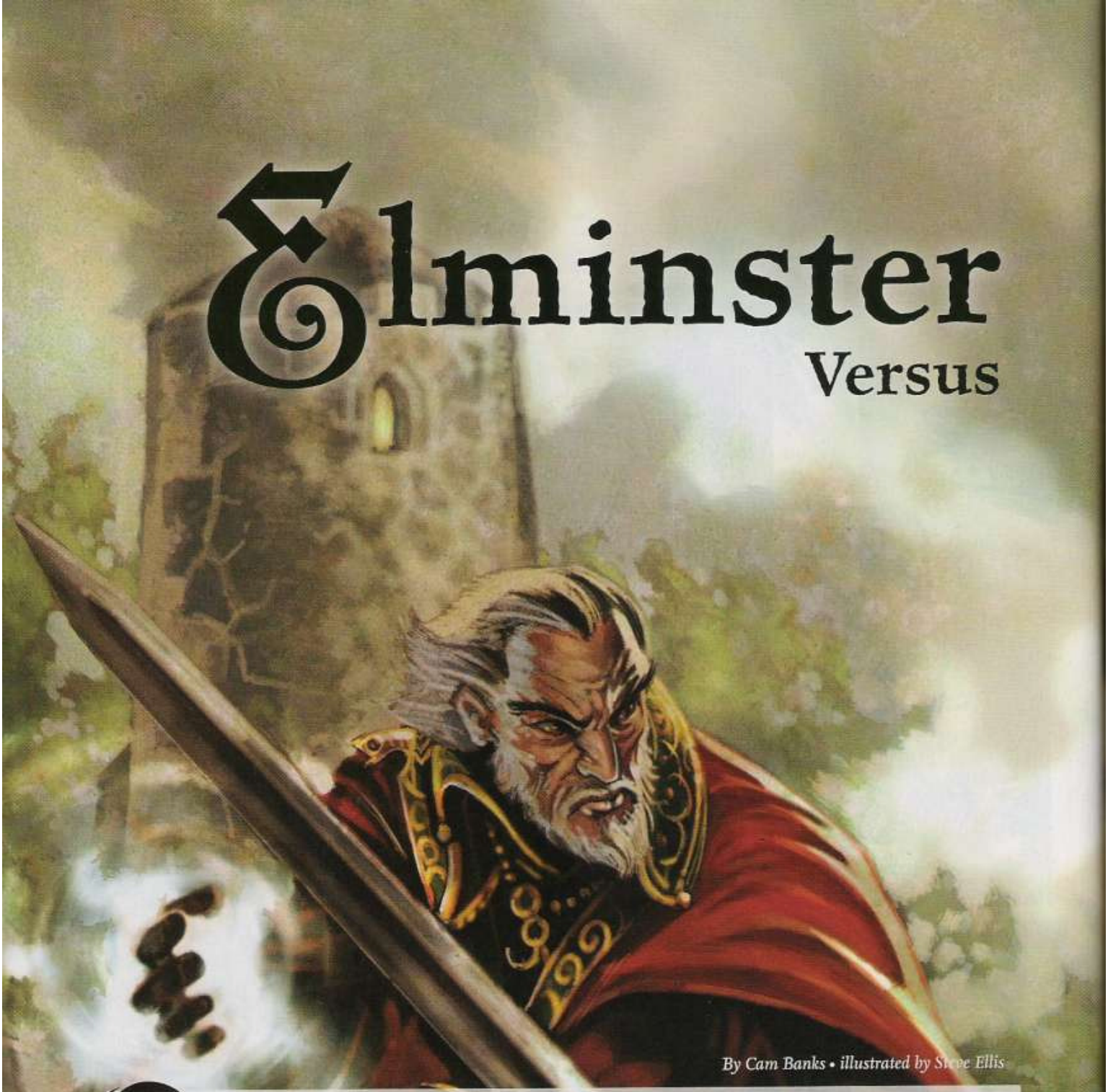
Dalamar snatched up a tub of ice cream and bowed. "Agreed. But no spells this time. Goodbye, as they say in this world." Abruptly he was gone.

Elminster turned to Rautheene. "More wine, Lady?"

She gave him a dazzling smile. "Next time. Goodbye and hello, as always." My armchair was suddenly empty.

Elminster shrugged, winked up at me, and went on eating.

Elminster Versus



By Cam Banks • *illustrated by Steve Ellis*

OVERHEARD IN THE COMMON ROOM OF THE WORLD SERPENT INN:

"So how about wizards? Know any really good wizards?"

"Well, sure. I know plenty of wizards. I could rattle off a laundry list of wizards longer than the tarrasque's tail. Wizards are a dime a dozen."

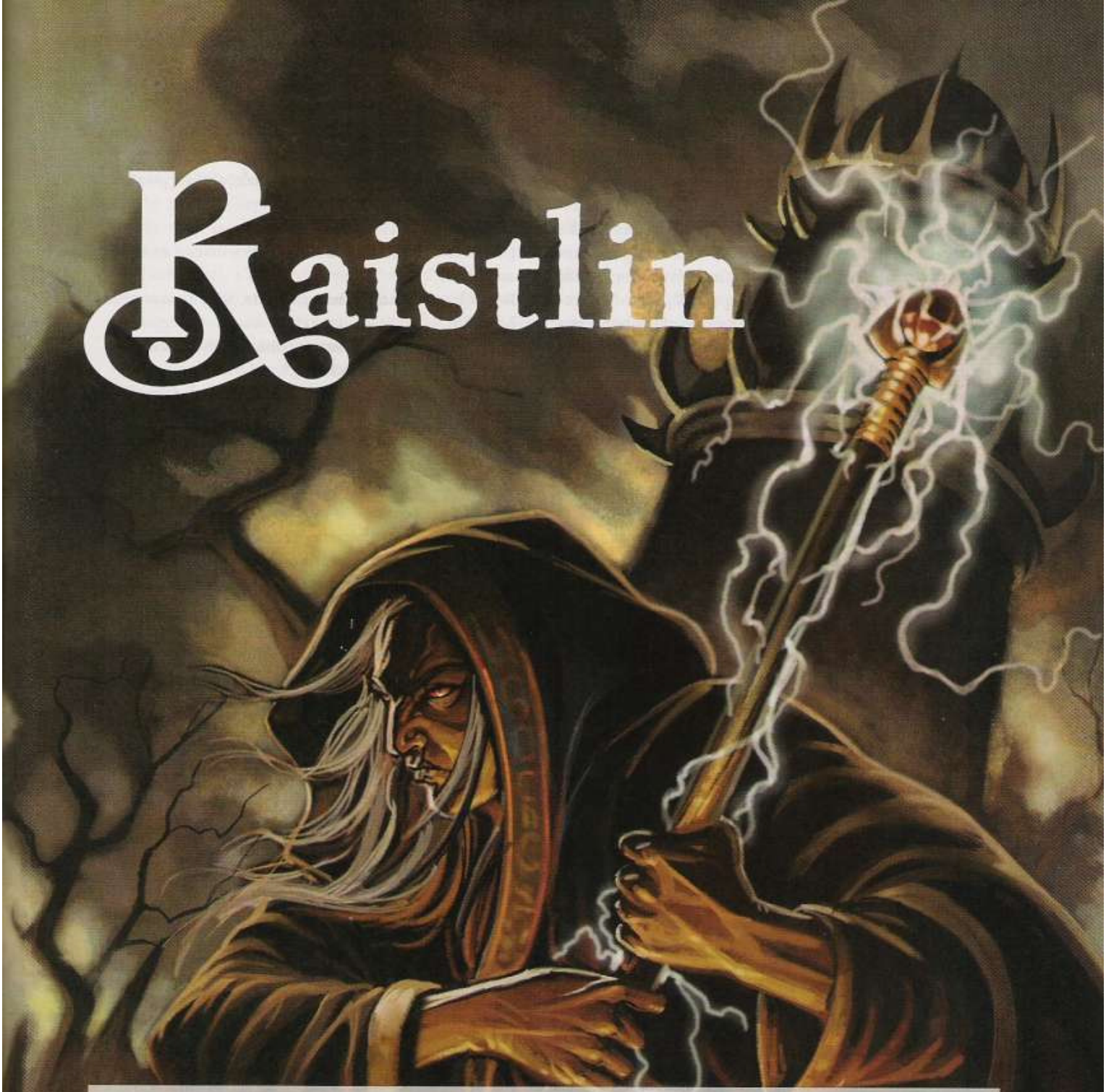
"No, no, I mean good wizards. You know, the really famous kind. The kind that people write books about."

"Buddy, I know a pair of wizards who people write whole series of books about."

"Oh really? So which of them would come out on top if they had to fight each other?"

"Now that, my fresh-faced friend, is the million-gold-piece question."

Raistlin



I am Goalkeeper—watcher, recorder, and rules master for countless competitions on equally innumerable planes. I've seen much in my time, and if it's the spell-battle to end all spell-battles you're after, I can point you in the right direction.

When it comes to wizard duels, there's no ticket that would sell more across any world than Raistlin versus Elminster. Assuming I could make the arrangements, of course. You're not interested in the logistics of booking arenas or working with difficult schedules. No, you want to know who'd win. Right? That's easy. Both of them.

Now, let me explain. There's all kinds of reasons why one would beat the other, but what you need is some background, so you can understand my professional opinion.

IN THIS CORNER...

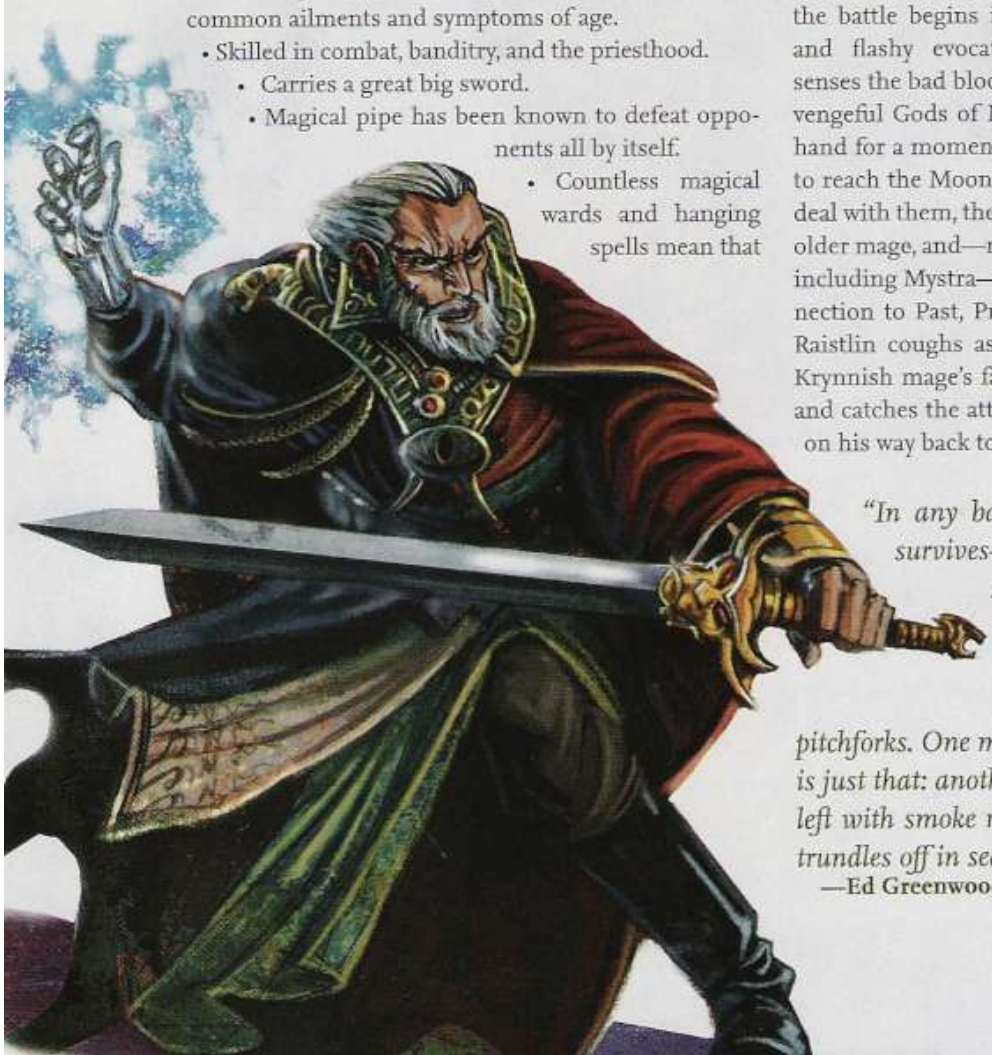
Elminster, the Sage of Shadowdale

Abeir-Toril's resident archmage par excellence is Elminster Aumar, a household name among adventurers in the lands of Faerûn and widely regarded as being responsible for more fantastic exploits than any other wizard of his age—and his age has purportedly lasted centuries. Elminster is famous for his pipe, his voluminous robes, his multi-faceted personality, and his love of food, women, and magic (not necessarily in that order).

A Chosen of Mystra, the goddess of magic, Elminster is rumored to have been her lover on at least one occasion, and tutored many of her other champions in the past. He's a founder of the Harpers, he put Shadowdale on the map, and he's been to Hell and back... literally. Not just a paragon of wizardry, Elminster has experienced life as a thief, a warrior, a priest, and even a woman. He's quite the all-rounder, as you can imagine. Few mages have the stomach for the kinds of things Elminster is said to have done, let alone spend time in the places Elminster has been. Fewer still come out on the other end with their minds in one piece. Elminster's done it all.

Pros

- Blessed by the Goddess of Magic.
- Blood surges with magical power, eliminating most common ailments and symptoms of age.
- Skilled in combat, banditry, and the priesthood.
- Carries a great big sword.
- Magical pipe has been known to defeat opponents all by itself.
- Countless magical wards and hanging spells mean that defeating him releases lots of nasty outsiders and dragons, to the detriment of his foes.
- Numerous friends, allies, former lovers, and supporters.



Cons

- Old and burdened by an enormous list of enemies and rivals.
- Beholden to many allies and gods, who always need his help.
- Lusty and indulgent when it comes to the baser appetites (see "The Wizards Three").
- Likes to keep a great deal of magical talismans, enchantments, relics, and amulets active at any one time, potentially opening the door to effects that target such things.
- Everyone knows who he is and where he lives.

Elminster Wins!

When dealing with mages from other worlds, it's always best to be prepared for strange and peculiar ways of using magic. Thus informed, it's a simple matter of finding out how to counter the other mage's magics. This is Elminster's basic approach to the confrontation with Raistlin Majere, who appears to be a wizardly lightweight, judging by his incessant cough and skinny arms. The Sage of Shadowdale talks up a storm, annoying Raistlin and cleverly hiding a number of minor yet potent spells. When the battle begins in earnest, with necromantic energy and flashy evocations flying everywhere, Elminster senses the bad blood between Raistlin and Krynn's three vengeful Gods of Magic. He lets Raistlin get the upper hand for a moment, long enough for an arcane message to reach the Moon Gods of Krynn. Hashing out a quick deal with them, the three open up a direct channel to the older mage, and—now bolstered by four deities of magic, including Mystra—Elminster shuts down Raistlin's connection to Past, Present, Future, and magic in general. Raistlin coughs as Elminster blows pipesmoke in the Krynnish mage's face. Elminster is declared the winner and catches the attention of a sultry Red Robe sorceress on his way back to Shadowdale.

"In any battle, Elminster doesn't care if he survives—but, down the centuries, HAS survived, in the process defeating countless spell-hurling sentient creatures, snarling monsters, and just plain angry husbands with pitchforks. One more sneering puppy of a spellhurler is just that: another pair of soon-to-be-empty boots, left with smoke rising out of them while Elminster trundles off in search of a fresh tankard."

—Ed Greenwood, Creator of the FORGOTTEN REALMS

AND IN THIS CORNER...

Raistlin, the Master of Past and Present

On the world of Krynn, there's never been a mage quite as ambitious or as talented as Raistlin Majere. With his hourglass eyes, golden skin, and the legendary Staff of Magius, Raistlin's clearly a different breed of wizard than even the others among Krynn's Orders of High Sorcery. The youngest mage to ever pass the potentially fatal Test of High Sorcery, Raistlin never let his constant health problems and sibling issues keep him from acquiring tremendous power, gathering items of arcane might, and challenging the gods.

Aside from his staff, a *dragon orb*, and an enspelled silver dagger, Raistlin eschewes magic items for the most part, calling them a crutch for the weak. Quite a bold statement! He's traveled back in time, cheated death more than once, and helped the gods find Krynn after it had been stolen by the Queen of Darkness. You could probably find a wizard with a bigger inventory of magical trinkets, or one with a nicer personality, but you won't find one with a more disciplined commitment to overcoming the obstacles toward true magical power than Raistlin.

Pros

- Not afraid to challenge authority.
- Vast magical knowledge surpassing his own world's conventions.
- Incredibly ambitious, focused, and disciplined.
- Not reliant on magic items.
- Knows what it's like to be weak, bullied, and threatened.
- Being Master of Past and Present means he's intimately familiar with time and alternate histories, and he can foresee thousands of potential outcomes.
- Still manages to affect world-spanning change despite his death.

Cons

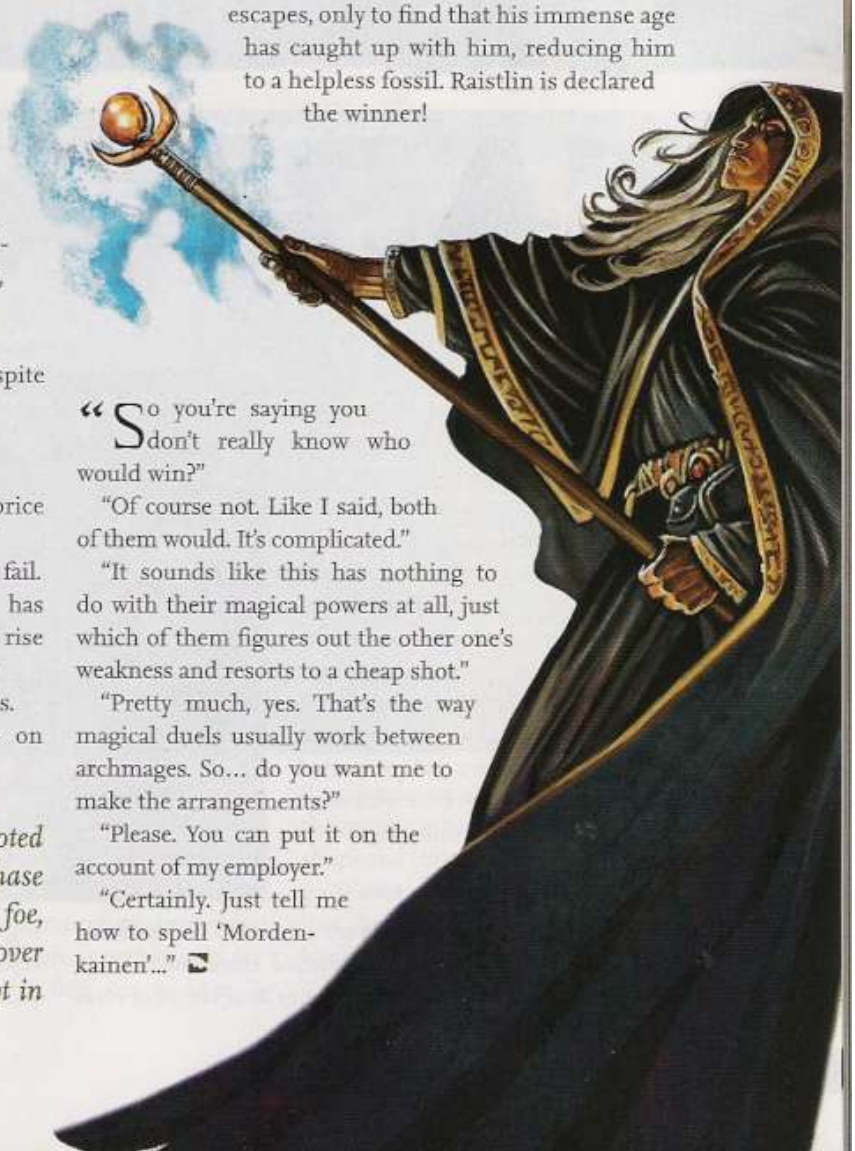
- Frail and stricken with an incurable cough, the price he paid to pass the Test.
- Hated by many wizards who would love to see him fail.
- Unpopular with the Gods of Magic, who he has managed to intimidate or sideline in his meteoric rise to power.
- Severe and caustic personality leaves him few allies.
- Haunted by his past and occasional reliance on his brother.

"Raistlin is incredibly disciplined. He has devoted his life to the magic. He doesn't drink or chase women (he lets women chase him), unlike his foe, who would probably enter this contest hung-over from his nightly carouse. Thus there is no doubt in my mind that Raistlin would blast Elminster out of the FORGOTTEN REALMS *clean into* GREYHAWK*."*

—Margaret Weis, Co-Creator of DRAGONLANCE

Raistlin Wins!

The battle begins predictably, with Elminster calling Raistlin a frail upstart and Raistlin responding with a long, smoldering glare. Various magics are thrown about to determine the weaknesses of each magus, but it's Raistlin's experience with sensing the ebb and flow of time all around him that gives him an early advantage. While Elminster fails to dispel or disjoin any magic items Raistlin possesses (there are precious few to get rid of), Raistlin locates two of Elminster's weak points: his extraordinary age (offset by magical enhancements) and his overwhelming appetite for cuisine and carnal endeavors. Following a series of jaunts through time and space, in which Elminster pursues the younger mage and unsuccessfully brandishes sword, spell, and skullduggery, Raistlin confronts the Sage of Shadowdale with his lecherous past far from his goddess's attentions. Thus distracted, Raistlin leaves Elminster exiled in a loop of history to indulge himself forever in wine, women, and song. Elminster eventually escapes, only to find that his immense age has caught up with him, reducing him to a helpless fossil. Raistlin is declared the winner!



"So you're saying you don't really know who would win?"

"Of course not. Like I said, both of them would. It's complicated."

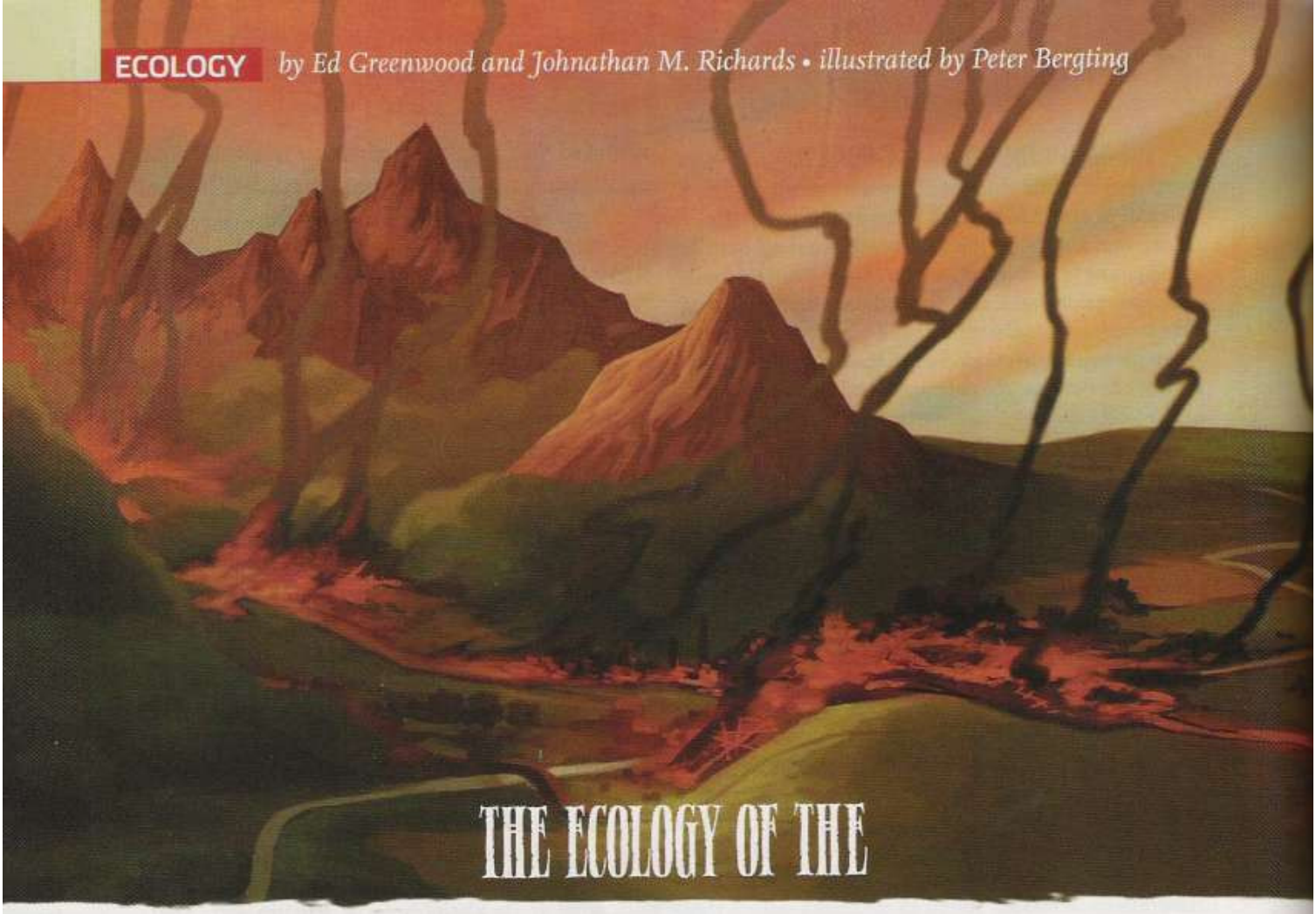
"It sounds like this has nothing to do with their magical powers at all, just which of them figures out the other one's weakness and resorts to a cheap shot."

"Pretty much, yes. That's the way magical duels usually work between archmages. So... do you want me to make the arrangements?"

"Please. You can put it on the account of my employer."

"Certainly. Just tell me how to spell 'Mordenkainen'..."

by Ed Greenwood and Johnathan M. Richards • illustrated by Peter Bergting



THE ECOLOGY OF THE TARRASQUE

Ancient, ageless, and unstoppable, all know to fear the unrelenting devastation that is the tarrasque. A creature of legend, associated with the greatest of heroes and the darkest of times, little is known of the beast widely held as the greatest of monsters. Reports of the monstrosity's powers and ways to slay it have changed over time, but tales of its brute destructive force remain ever constant. Yet, even the least likely rumors and purported banes are comforts for those who must face that which is ruin unleashed.

TARRASQUE HUNT

Bam-bam-bam! Dreelix slammed the gavel down hard three times in rapid succession. "This meeting of the Monster Hunters Association is hereby opened," he intoned.

He pressed on with uncharacteristic haste: "We'll worry about the normal preliminary stuff later. What I want to know—" and here his eager gaze fell upon Willowquisp, Spontayne, and Buntleby, to whom he had given an assignment the previous meeting—"is what can you tell me about the tarrasque?"

HISTORY OF THE TARRASQUE

Some of the oldest elven records are *ahlrekauth*, or "speaking gems." The few magically-accomplished elves and human loremasters who can awaken such stones hear voices of elves dead for eons, telling tales so old that the worlds those speakers inhabited have themselves died, crumbling to dust around extinguished stars.

One such gem holds an account that might describe the first appearance of a tarrasque, in a kingdom of elves, half-elves, humans, and halflings known as Aeritueur. This is its tale:

The Starfall Shield gleamed and sparkled day and night. The mightiest spell-crafting Aeritueur had ever seen—a wall of devouring magics to keep the Orgog and the Gnawing Ones out, that the valiant strength of our land not be sapped in ceaseless fighting against such marauding monsters. There was much rejoicing, and wonderment at the titanic achievement—particularly after the fell dragon Larau Thoon sneeringly

dived deep into the Starfall, only to be caught, held frozen, and slowly melted away, despite every magic the wyrm hurled. Truly the Starfall was a barrier beyond compare, that girt fair Aeritueur on all of its mountain flanks, to keep us all safe.

Yet at the rising of the third moon after the crafting of the Starfall, something emerged from the dark woods in its most remote location, in the demesne known as Rondaeral, for he who lorded over it. An elf in tatters, with a shattered arm and so wracked with pain that he could scarcely shuffle, appeared out of the dying sparks of a *farstride* spell, to gasp out that Rondaeral was gone, devoured with all his household by a gigantic thing, a beast of great jaws that tore through castle towers and hill-tombs with ease, hurling down Rondaeral's castle and the town of Phondaeray around it.

"Rondaeral is laid waste," said he, "for the creature ate every shining knight who rode against it, without pause nor prudence, as it stalked on down the road devouring every elf, horse, housecat, and passing beast in the hamlets of Tauront, Aladriel's Gate, Narnath, and Luel's Tomb. I fled before it, and in the market-town of Oraunghglieir only just found time enough to prepare the *farstride* casting that brought me here, as it gnawed and clawed its way through the buildings toward me, dashing down shops and turreted mansions alike with great sweeps of its tail. A hail of arrows they hurled against it, and a bright lance of brilliant-armored knights, and it ignored the one and smashed the

KNOWLEDGE OF THE TARRASQUE

The following table shows the results of a Knowledge (arcana) check as it relates to the tarrasque. Information about the tarrasque is often held by scholars of ancient history, lore books from fallen kingdoms, and wild-eyed refugees many pray are mad. The tarrasque appears on page 240 of the *Monster Manual*.

Knowledge (arcana)

DC	Result
30	The creature you face is none other than the tarrasque, a powerful monster known for its unstoppable destructive capabilities.
35	The tarrasque sleeps for months or years at a time, awakening for several days between slumbers. During such time, it attacks and destroys all that it sees.
40	Mere sight of the tarrasque when it attacks can inspire terror in those who witness its destructive abilities, and its thick carapace keeps it safe from most spells.
45	The tarrasque has the most powerful regenerative abilities known, and can regenerate even after succumbing to a *disintegrate* spell or a death effect. The only known way to permanently destroy the tarrasque is to use a *wish* or *miracle* spell immediately after rendering it unconscious.

other with its talons ere eating the remnants. So much I saw before my magic snatched me away."

Now in the bright court of Shelarralieir, Highqueen of Aeritueur, tall and wise courtiers scoffed at this telling. Oh, their swift spells told them the one in tatters truly believed what he said—but they held that he must have been driven mad, or been enspelled, to see things far from the truth.

Yet no sooner had they dismissed his words than the chamber where farstriders appeared rocked at the arrival of a fair elven knight in scorched and riven armor, whose pleas for aid were shouts none could ignore. From Lothaund this one came, and he cried that they had seen Oraunghglieir torn apart and toppled from afar, and mustered all the battle-might of Lothaund, mages and swordwielders alike, to make war on whatever had hurled down Oraunghglieir.

A great beast they saw, stalking toward them like a wingless dragon larger than any seen before, ponderous and slow.

At first they could scarce believe that this one beast, however monstrous, could alone have been the bane of Oraunghglieir. Yet they hurled their spells at it, rode at it with lance and sword, sought to pierce it with volleys from their greatbows, and even spell-hurled savage monsters into its path, to force it to fight them—yea, even great dragons!

But the Great Beast devoured and slew and prevailed, laying waste to all before it, until it came at last to Lothaund, and breached its walls, and started to hurl it down. Thousands of elves perished fighting it, and more fled, this knight among them.

This time the wise courtiers looked troubled, and did not scoff when this sorry knight warned them that the bright court could not be saved, and perhaps not even Aeritueur itself.

War-trumpets blared and spells cried warnings afar, calling all the mailed might of Aeritueur to fight this one foe.

Yet even as a realm rose up in alarum, swords flashing, the Great Beast strode out of riven Lothaund and into the nearest mountain—into it, sinking down into the solid stone as a swamp-snake glides down under inky waters. As suddenly as it had come, the Great Beast was gone.

For the first time. For all too soon, it came again.

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE TARRASQUE

By its physical build alone, a tarrasque might easily be mistaken for a dinosaur, towering more than 50 feet tall and measuring at least 70 feet from nose to tail. It stands upright on its powerful hind legs, with its body thrust forward and its long tail providing a counterbalance. In general stance, it moves much like a tyrannosaurus, although its front limbs are significantly larger: while a tyrannosaurus has stumpy forelimbs unable even to reach its own head, the tarrasque's arms are long enough to touch the ground as it stands erect, and in fact the creature has been known to "knuckle walk" in the manner of some apes.

TARRASQUE PLOTS

The tarrasques is legendary for its single-minded rampaging and the fearsome destruction it wreaks. Here are a few ways to introduce this destroyer into a campaign.

Arcane Glutton: A sudden surge in spellcasting or the use of a rare magic item in an area "awakens" a tarrasque. It cuts a path of destruction toward the center of the heaviest magic use, devouring all living things. It continues its rampage until either it is sated or no magical source exists in the region for it to consume.

Artifact's End: The PCs come into the possession of a powerful but evil magical treasure that can only be destroyed within the tarrasque's stomach. Unfortunately, the tarrasque was last spotted mere months ago and is not likely to reawake for years.

Defending the Realm: The tarrasque has a special relationship with a kingdom, serving as its monstrous defender. Stealing a crown or other royal regalia, spilling royal blood on a throne, or slaying or kidnapping royalty causes the appearance of a tarrasque that stalks those responsible.

Ritual of Ages: A group of nihilistic tarrasque monster cultists (see *Dragon* #296) seek to permanently awaken and worship the tarrasque as it brings about the end of civilization.

Covering the tarrasque's dorsal half is an exceptionally thick, highly reflective armored carapace covered in massive spikes, while twin horns of similar size and shape jut forth from the creature's head. The horns are used offensively, while the carapace serves a defensive role—not only against physical attacks, but also against many magical attacks as well.

The tarrasque's carapace has been described as looking like "melted diamond" (by those lucky enough to have encountered the creature and lived to tell the tale), which accurately describes the carapace's toughness, reflectivity, and overall smoothness. In truth, the tarrasque's carapace is not made from diamond—melted or otherwise—having a unique composition.

The bodily processes of a tarrasque can readily digest all organic matter, living and dead, creatures and plants—even wood that has been painted or varnished. The lone destroyer's immunity to poison leaves it unharmed by dyes, paints, molds, other growths on decaying organic matter, and so on. A tarrasque has an expanding gullet that holds creatures and objects swallowed whole, which tumbles such devoured items around and around in a continuous spiral, working them down into a succession of three stomachs. These stomachs are among the most effective destructive engines in the multiverse and little—even the most powerful magical artifacts—can survive within.

The uppermost stomach is a hot, wet place of tumbling stones and internal spines (the stomach wall seems lined with thousands of bony knife-blades) that breaks down large objects; its walls are durable and very strong, with moving knots of muscle that can literally punch, squeeze, and claw at swallowed items. This stomach can shatter large rocks down into smaller stones, break clods of earth into scattered motes,

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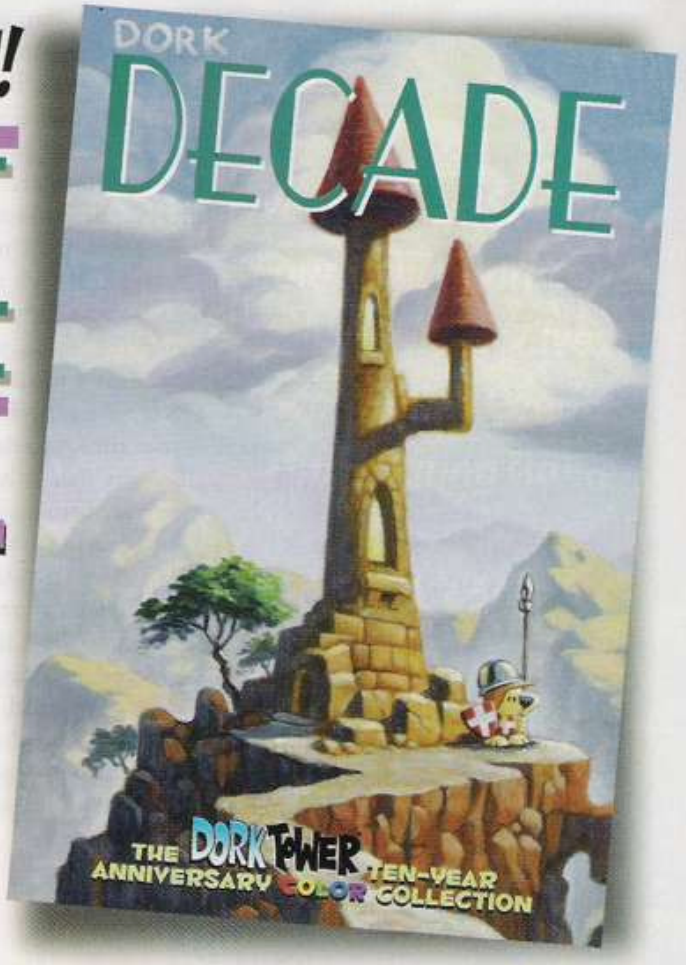


crack bark and bones, dismember bodies, and puncture containers so as to spill out and separate the contents. Belts and ropes are typically sawn into shorter lengths in this stomach, and glass is shattered. Metal items and glass shards are typically moved on swiftly to the deeper stomachs.

The middle stomach of a tarrasque is a churning, energetically pulsing fleshy cauldron of corrosive acid. Unique in all the planes, this fluid possesses a disjunctive property, capable of stripping the magical powers from consumed magics. Here everything breaks down.

The last stomach of a tarrasque is a long, winding, rhythmically-thrumming tube of great heat, where anything that survives the previous stomachs—typically only the strongest and rarest metals—meets its end. The acidic slurry boils off and is absorbed by the creature.

It takes a tarrasque mere moments to force what it consumes through its devastating digestive process. Despite the swiftness of this metabolism, the vast majority of the energy is stored. While it takes a great deal of food to keep an active tarrasque sated, tarrasques are actually quite docile—this stored energy sustaining them through deep, decades-long hibernations.

When preparing for such a hibernation, a tarrasque employs one of its most unusual and rarely witnessed abilities. Once fully glutted and ready to go back to sleep, a tarrasque gains the ability to earth glide in much the same way as xorns do: it burrows through stone, dirt, or any sort of earth except refined metal or continuous veins of pure metal as easily as fish swim through water, without disturbing or dislodging anything or leaving a tunnel or hole in its wake. This lets the beast access subterranean caverns its bulk would normally not allow it to reach. Lacking a large enough cavern to lair in, it can earth glide until buried, to "be at one with the stone" (sharing space with solid rock, a condition referred to as "arnstone" by some dwarven sages). This is why there is so much debate and mystery surrounding the location and nature of a tarrasque's lair.

While in arnstone state, a tarrasque does not suffocate, but sinks rapidly into a torpor in which its bodily processes slow and it hibernates until the need for new nourishment awakens it into the "burrowing" state again. In damp rock, where mineral-laden waters percolate, and with a belly filled with the ruins of a large town or city, this need might not arise for as long as 50 years. In dry or caustic rock, or if a tarrasque is disturbed by tremors (including the relatively minor vibrations of nearby rock or creature movements), shifts in temperature, or actual wounding (direct damage from the pick of a dwarf prospector or the weapon of an adventurer, for example), awakening might come much sooner.

A tarrasque's carapace and outer hide are clearly visible to earth gliding or quarrying creatures who reach one's immediate vicinity. Earth gliding creatures cannot glide into or through the volume of earth or rock occupied

by an arnstone tarrasque; its body seems "solid" to such creatures, who are deflected aside from it.

A tarrasque comes out of torpor with astonishing speed if disturbed, typically taking only 1d4+1 rounds to become fully aroused. While awakening, a tarrasque has the same properties and vulnerabilities as when sinking into torpor. A waking tarrasque is unpredictable; it might move away from the disturbance, turn to confront it, or "flee" at high speed for some time and then try to settle down into torpor again.

Psychology and Society of the Tarrasque

A tarrasque's actions are all driven by one need: nearly insatiable hunger. It has an intellect just above that of an animal and instinctively sees all other creatures as food. (Of course, it also sees trees and plants as food, buildings as food, rocks and dirt as food, and so on.) Given its powerful regenerative abilities, it has little to fear from combat with most creatures, and even those that have the capability of killing it—like high-level spellcasters—don't register as anything other than another type of potential food. Thus, a tarrasque never retreats from battle, no matter how events might turn against it.

A tarrasque is by no means an evil or vindictive force. It is no more a source of evil than a hungry wolf or lion, although this view is difficult to maintain by those whose homes, families, and entire lives have been destroyed by such a ravenous beast. The only real enmity the tarrasque ever feels toward its living victims is reserved for creatures capable of flight. Since the tarrasque has no method of ranged attack, any creature capable of flying beyond its reach has nothing to fear—a fact that annoys a hungry tarrasque to no end.

Once the tarrasque has its fill—a process that can normally take up to a week, during which time it remains completely awake and continually alert—the creature begins to get drowsy and prepares for a long sleep. So long as it is not currently in battle (as its primitive brain refuses to allow it to depart from a fight while there is still living morsels to ingest), it finds the nearest chunk of solid rock big enough to support its massive bulk and settles down within for a lengthy hibernation.

Advanced Tarrasque

The tarrasque is widely held as the toughest monster in Dungeons & Dragons, despite there being creatures in the *Monster Manual* of higher CRs, not to mention dozens of other deadlier beasts in other books. As the tarrasque can be advanced to have any number of Hit Dice, presented here is a CR 30 version ready to challenge even epic-level heroes.

The Tarrasque **CR 30**
Advanced tarrasque
N Colossal magical beast
Init +7; **Senses** scent; Listen +25, Spot +25

AC 40, touch 5, flat-footed 32; Dodge
hp 1,539 hp (78 HD), regeneration 40; **DR** 15/epic
SR 32
Immune ability damage, disease, energy drain, fire, poison
Fort +50, **Ref** +39, **Will** +28

Speed 20 ft.
Melee bite +89 (6d8+19/16–20/×3)
and 2 horns +87 (2d8+9)
and 2 claws +87 (3d6+9)
and tail slap +87 (4d8+9)
Space 30 ft. **Reach** 20 ft.
Base Atk +78; Grp +94
Atk Options Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Multiattack, Power Attack; improved grab, rush, swallow whole

Abilities Str 48, Dex 16, Con 39, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 14
SQ augmented critical, carapace, frightful presence
Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor (×5), Improved

Natural Attack (bite), Improved Natural Attack (claws), Improved Natural Attack (horns), Improved Natural Attack (tail slap), Improved Overrun, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness (×6)

Skills Listen +25, Search +16, Spot +25, Survival +21 (+23 following tracks)

Regeneration (Ex) No form of attack deals lethal damage to the tarrasque. The tarrasque regenerates even if it fails a saving throw against a *disintegrate* spell or a death effect. If the tarrasque fails its save against a spell or effect that would kill it instantly (such as those mentioned above), the spell or effect instead deals nonlethal damage equal to the creature's full normal hit points +10 (or 1,549 hp). The tarrasque is immune to effects that produce incurable or bleeding wounds, such as mummy rot, a sword with the wounding special ability, or a clay golem's cursed wound ability.

The tarrasque can be slain only by raising its nonlethal damage total to its full normal hit points +10 (or 1,549 hit points) and using a *wish* or *miracle* spell to keep it dead.

If the tarrasque loses a limb or body part, the lost portion regrows in 1d6 minutes (the detached piece dies and decays normally). The creature can reattach the severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, the tarrasque must hit a Huge or smaller opponent with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can try to swallow the foe the following round.

Rush (Ex) Once per minute, the normally slow-moving tarrasque can move at a speed of 150 feet.

Swallow Whole (Ex) The tarrasque can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of Huge or smaller size by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes 2d8+8 points of crushing damage plus 2d8+6 points of acid damage per round from the tarrasque's digestive juices. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by dealing 50 points of damage to the tarrasque's digestive tract (AC 25). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out. The tarrasque's gullet can hold 2 Huge, 8 Large, 32 Medium, 128 Small, or 512 Tiny or smaller creatures.

Augmented Critical (Ex) The tarrasque's bite threatens a critical hit on a natural attack roll of 18–20, dealing triple damage on a successful critical hit. Improved Critical doubles this to 16–20.

Carapace (Ex) The tarrasque's armorlike carapace is exceptionally tough and highly reflective, deflecting all rays, lines, cones, and even *magic missile*

spells. There is a 30% chance of reflecting any such effect back at the caster; otherwise, it is merely negated. Check for reflection before rolling to overcome the creature's spell resistance.

Frightful Presence (Su) The tarrasque can inspire terror by charging or attacking. Affected creatures must succeed on a DC 36 Will save or become shaken, remaining in that condition as long as they remain with 60 feet of the tarrasque. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Skills The tarrasque has a +8 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

"...That's all the information we have," explained Willowquisp, closing his oversized tome of unusual creatures. "Might I inquire as to your interest? Surely you don't intend a tarrasque hunt?"

"Why not?" asked Dreelix, puffing out his chest. "We are, after all, the renowned Monster Hunters, and the tarrasque is merely an oversized monster. You yourself said it could be killed with two spells in quick succession, a vindication of the power of spellcraft over brute force if ever I heard one."

"We'd be well out of our league..." began Spontayne.

"Pshaw!" scoffed Dreelix. "Two *wish* spells and we're in business!"

"Sadly," pointed out Spontayne, "*wish* is beyond our capabilities."

"So we take some money out of the coffers and pick up a couple of scrolls," dismissed Dreelix. "No big deal." At that, Grindle the Coin-Counter expelled an involuntary "Eep!" As the Association's treasurer, he was well aware of the current sad state of their coffers.

"What, may I ask, is the sudden fascination with killing the tarrasque?" asked Buntleby.

"As it happens," replied Dreelix, "I was cleaning out my study, and discovered this ancient tome from my old mentor." He pulled a dusty manual out from under the head table, opening it to a diagram of the fabled beast and flipping it around so the others could see. While Spontayne and Willowquisp leaned forward to examine the book, Buntleby instead studied their illustrious President. Dreelix seldom mentioned his old mentor, preferring that others assume he had never needed such assistance in mastering—if that was indeed the appropriate word—the wizardly arts. For him to so casually mention he had once required tutoring could only mean his attention was focused elsewhere.

"Look at this passage here," Dreelix said, pointing at a fading section. "Killing the tarrasque releases a fortune of diamonds hidden in its shell!"

"Why would it have diamonds in its shell?" queried Spontayne, puzzled.

"It's not as easy as you make it out to be," scowled Buntleby. "The tarrasque isn't a piñata—you can't just whack it open and get your toy surprise."

"In any case," scoffed Willowquisp, "This book is rather outdated. It was useful for its time, but now the 'facts' contained therein are considered to be mere legends and fables nowadays, nothing more."[1]

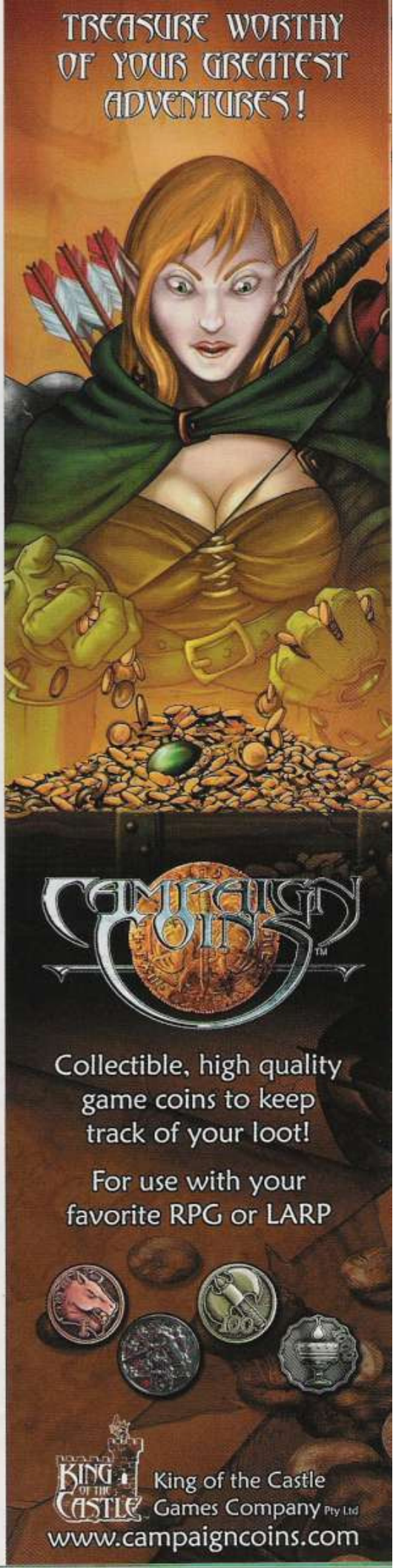
"Hmmph!" glared Dreelix, grabbing back his tome.

"Tell you what," suggested Spontayne. "If you can find it, we'll kill it."

"Hmmph," Dreelix repeated, then pressed on with the rest of the evening's agenda.

NOTES

1 Apparently Dreelix's tome is similar to the 1983 version of *Monster Manual II*, written by Gary Gygax for first edition AD&D. In that venerable work—the tarrasque's first appearance in D&D— treating the monster's carapace with acid and heating it in a furnace yielded 10d10 diamonds valued at 1,000 gp each!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Demon Days

by Wolfgang Baur • illustrated by Ben Wootten

The end is nigh! It's not the apocalypse, but it's very close: the end of the Savage Tide Adventure Path is just a matter of a few more game sessions away for those who have been playing since the start. With any adventure this epic it's easy to lose track of all the events so far, and probably even lose a few PCs along the way. Here's a guide to what's come before in the Savage Tide and some ideas for where to take your characters next.

What's Come Before

The events to date have led you, step by step, from Vanderboren Manor and Sasserine to the Isle of Dread and planes beyond. You are prepared for the final assault on the Gaping Maw against the infinite hordes of the Abyss—as prepared as any mortal can be, fortified by planar allies recruited with the help of the boatman Charon and hints from the archmage Iggwilv. But what brought you to this point?

There is No Honor

This all started long ago, when Lavinia entreated you to help secure access to her family vault then asked for your help with her missing brother, Vanthus. You found him at Parrot Island, where he trapped you in the tunnels below. You escaped from them and found the Lotus Dragon guild just about ready to take over the Sasserine sea trade. Alas, Vanthus escaped, but not for long.

SPOILER WARNING!

The following summaries are meant to ground DMs and PCs who have played through the Savage Tide Adventure Path. PCs should not read summaries for adventures they've yet to complete.

ADVENTURE TIE

This installment of Savage Tidings links to "Prince of Demons," the twelfth installment of the Savage Tide Adventure Path, presented in DUNGEON #150.

The Bullywug Gambit

You sought out Kraken's Cove, a location mentioned in the documents found in the Lotus Dragon guildhall; the place was in chaos, with flesh-eating pirates and many deadly creatures running loose. Fighting off diseased and enraged beasts took valuable time, but you wound your way through the caverns to encounter Captain Harliss Javell. She told you she sent her first mate and bullywug conscripts to Sasserine for revenge against Vanthus. The race was on, back to save the city during a festival celebrating the victory over Kyuss. You dodged assassin stilt-walkers and saved Lavinia from the bullywugs and their allies.

The Sea Wyvern's Wake

After a bit of rest, a thankful Lavinia had more work for you. It was time to set sail on the *Sea Wyvern* and transport a vital supply shipment to Farshore on the Isle of Dread. After a stop at ruined Tamoachan, you ran a Scarlet Brotherhood blockade and found an old enemy stowed away. In the middle of a Sargasso sea, you found and defeated a seaweed-dwelling monstrosity, but your ship was caught by a storm, wrecking on the northern shore of the Isle of Dread.

Here There Be Monsters

With the *Sea Wyvern* no longer seaworthy, the only option was a trek through the jungle, meeting dinosaurs and terror birds while taking the surviving passengers and crew along to safety. On the far side of the mountain range, a band of gargoyles repeatedly attacked. One of your allies was abducted by a bar-lgura demon deep in the island interior. Following his abductor led to a shrine to the Prince of Demons, Demogorgon, and a battle against the bar-lgura and his brood of vile followers.

Tides of Dread

With the demons at the shrine defeated, you arrived at Farshore just in time to see it attacked by pirates. You helped the defenders and were reunited with Lavinia Vanderboren. The pirates were just scouts, though, and you discovered that the Crimson Fleet was coming to pillage and raze Farshore. You helped prepare the colony's defenses, forging alliances with the natives, fighting dinosaurs, recovering and making repairs to the *Sea Wyvern*, and defeating an aspect of an Olman god. When the Crimson Fleet hove into view, you crossed swords with Lavinia's corrupted brother Vanthus and defeated him.

The Lightless Depths

Having learned from prisoners of the Crimson Fleet that the *shadow pearls* came from the north end of the Isle of Dread, you sailed there to put a stop to their creation. There, you found troglodytes aiding in a much deeper operation. You went deep below the Isle of Dread, past ancient wardings of Olman times, into the deep dark where mongrelmen and aboleths lurked. One imprisoned aboleth told you how to sabotage the kopru-created *shadow pearls* being created below in Golismorga, the city of madness where the aboleths once ruled. In a ziggurat deep below the island, where kopru behemoths and elders held sway, you fought the aberrations to a standstill, broke the wardings that held back the aboleths, and destroyed the source of the *shadow pearls*.

City of Broken Idols

Upon returning to Farshore, you again heard from Lavinia, this time concerning a missionary and a mysterious seal related to ruins in the center of the island. You learned that the demons who infected the central plateau were no longer content to live in their city, but were spreading outward. The trip to the plateau and its forbidden island held many dangers, such as a titanic crocodile, demonic skinwalkers, and a powerful wastrilith demon—all guarding a profane temple. Danger did not stop your advance, although the demons and magic-slinging skinwalkers came in ever greater numbers. The temple was home to Khala, an aspect of Demogorgon, and his pet demons. Khala's death drew Demogorgon's attention directly to you for the first time.

Serpents of Scuttlecove

Soon after, you discovered that several *shadow pearls* had already left the island, bound for Scuttlecove. At Farshore, Lavinia had been abducted by her brother Vanthus, now undead. Captain Harliss Javell, of Kraken's Cove, asked you to meet her in Scuttlecove so she might explain where Lavinia was held. When you showed up as requested, yuan-ti ambushed you. To find Lavinia, you had to rescue Harliss, who was both grateful and informative, and told you about the Crimson Fleet headquarters hidden not far away—but magically shielded. There, you fought your way past pirates, traps, ballistae, and a yagnoloth, to the leader of the Crimson Fleet, Cold Captain Wyther. You also discovered that Lavinia was taken to a prison in Gaping Maw, Demogorgon's layer of the Abyss. Worse, it was revealed that dozens of *shadow pearls* had spread throughout the cities of the world, and Demogorgon would soon trigger them with a ceremony in the Abyss. But how to stop a demon lord on his home plane?

Into the Maw

You ventured into the Gaping Maw, tracking Vanthus across the Abyssal Ocean in search of the prison Divided's Ire. Finding the island prison required some help, but with advice from minions of Orcus, your sailing finally took the right direction. Once there, you defeated Vanthus and dozens of demons to rescue Lavinia at last,

but she was not the one who knew Demogorgon's weakness. Orgosh the lich told you that the secret to stopping Demogorgon was known to an exiled demon—his former lover, Shami-Amourae—held in a completely different prison.

Wells of Darkness

A deeper prison than even Divided's Ire, the Wells of Darkness held gods and demon lords. Approaching Red Shroud, a succubus who rules the town of Broken Reach on Pazunia, you learned that Shami-Amourae did tryst with Demogorgon until she was imprisoned in the Wells of Darkness. Traveling to the Well of Debased Eros, you fought chasme, abyssal ghouls, and worse, but finally freed Shami-Amourae with the help of a demon lord named Ahazu the Seizer. In return for her freedom, Shami-Amourae revealed the secret of Demongorgon's split minds. Unfortunately, her freedom triggered a magical contingency that tore a hole in the River Styx and brought some of Demogorgon's servants to destroy anyone who had learned what Shami-Amourae might have told them. Fighting a mob of bar-lgura mounted on retrievers, you drove them away under a rain of forgetfulness.

Enemies of My Enemy

Offended by the planar rift in the Styx, the boatman Charon offered you his help in rallying Demogorgon's foes: Iggwilv, the Witch-Queen of Perrenland; the eladrin queen Morwel; Orcus, vile Prince of the Undead; and even Malcanthet, Queen of the Succubi. With a few trips along the Styx, over Yggdrasil, and beyond, you found the Prince of Demons has many enemies willing to bring their power to bear on the assault on Demogorgon's home layer. With a mixture of diplomacy and raw power, you forged alliances to bring entire planar armies to the cause. An assault on the infinite armies of the Gaping Maw began to seem a little less like suicide, and a little more like a plan.

Allies in the Abyss

Characters die, and when in the Abyss they die more often than usual. Here's a short list of possible cohorts, stand-ins, and potential replacement PCs to use if your party's body count rises to extreme levels.

Bright Benedal: An aasimar knight 18/sorcerer 1, with a lantern archon familiar, is one of many freebooters on the planes who sees the war against Demogorgon as a chance for glory. Anyone who fights Demogorgon and wins will be remembered, and Benedal plans to be in the forefront.

Flayed Mage Restagg: One of Orcus's servants, a dread wraith warlock 7, might make a terrifying replacement for a standard spellcaster. He knows much about the undead and necromancy, and can serve as a useful source of information from Orcus's legions. He might show up as an uninvited "liaison" between the Prince of the Undead and the PCs. He's rather obviously there to keep an eye on them and guard against treachery, but he also very much wants the mission to succeed. A strange bedfellow.

Fist of the Lawgiver: A powerful marut monk 5, he seeks to bring justice to the demonic "criminals" who had a hand in upsetting the flow of

the River Styx. It's a huge job, but who better than an inevitable to start the smiting?

Six-Fingered Legu: This half-elven rogue 5/sorcerer 7/arcane trickster 8 might join the party as a native guide who knows everyone and everything on the planes. With high ranks in Knowledge (the planes) and some magic to complement the party's weak points, Legu might prove useful in scouting and trickery, just in case a frontal assault doesn't work out.

Epic Allies

If you'd rather play one of the NPCs the party has approached recently, or a creature appropriate to the campaign's epic planar power, there are plenty to choose from. Depending on what gods your deceased character worshiped, it's possible an angel or other quasi-deity might take an interest and show up when his soul fails to find its way to the heavens without assistance.

Sir Andros Fearnaught: At CR 18, the eladrin Sir Andros Fearnaught from "Enemy of My Enemies" might make an appropriate replacement for a fallen PC. While perhaps not the most likable ally the PCs have encountered thus far, his combat skills and association with Morwel's court likely put him in the frontlines of an assault on Gaping Maw.

Prison Breakers: A number of the prisoners from Divided's Ire might have been able to make their escapes during the PCs' adventures in the abyssal prison. Eager for revenge against the villain who imprisoned them, such escapees might make useful, if temporary, allies.

Other Outsiders: A celestial such as a solar, planetar, or even valkyrie (from *Deities & Demigods*, page 200) might make an appropriate replacement PC as well.

With entire planar armies deployed, almost any kind of outsider from the lawful or good planes might have a reason to fight against the hordes of the Abyss. While nothing quite replaces a powerful PC you've played during the whole adventure path, at least look at the possibilities to power up with some celestial champion or heroic figure from myth and legend. The big finale is not something you want to miss.

What's Next...

At this point, you are either at epic levels or very close. It might be worth your while to figure out how to optimize your character's skills or epic feats, but it's also worth reviewing all the epic equipment granted to the party before the eve of battle, preparing a few contingencies, and planning to play a cohort as needed. If you have found a legendary item, now's the time to use *commune* or *gate* for the details. Now's also the time to cash in every favor you've ever earned from a noble, celestial, genie, or archmage. If not now, when?

Paladins and clerics should prepare their last rites, for no soul killed in the Abyss is likely to be easily resurrected when soul-sucking demons abound. Each player should give some thought to whether he wants to continue the campaign after this adventure. A final glorious battle is a great end to a hero's life; think up some last words for your character, just in case. Better yet, think up some heroic words for the possibility that your character is the one who destroys the Prince of Demons.

Since the finale features plenty of armies and action, you'll want to be sure to have a system of messengers or couriers in place to communicate to the various generals, or at least to hear from them if things are going well or poorly in the wider war. Familiars, mephits, couriers, the *sending* spell—whatever gets the news through to the people who need to hear. Communications are a powerful resource for any invading army; make sure you're prepared.

...And Beyond

What lies beyond the end of the Adventure Path? Sainthood, martyrhood, annihilation in the vilest pits of the multiverse—it's hard to say, really. If your character survives and triumphs over Demogorgon, you can take pride in having defeated an enormous evil and saving the world from the madness of the *shadow pearls*. There are two ways to go from there: epic campaigning as a figure of legend or retirement from adventuring life.

A continued campaign means fighting at a new level entirely; your foes would be the remaining demon lords, Demogorgon's scattered followers, and other planar powers that seek revenge against the forces of Good and Law. Your former allies might turn against you. Your reception at home might not be what you expect, either. Most people might not believe you if you say you've fought demons in the Abyss; those who do know it for a fact might not want to stand so close to someone who has clearly made powerful and even divine enemies. A continued campaign probably means leaving behind the Material Plane and fighting in a bigger arena. If that's what your group wants, there's plenty to do.

Clearly, a retirement to one of the Seven Heavens might be offered to a lawful good hero, or a hero's welcome from the valkyries to a chaotic good one. On the other hand, you might simply retire your adventuring boots and hoist a few tankards in Sigil, the City of Doors, or in the tavern where, many years ago, your characters first heard that Lady Lavinia was looking for a little help with her wayward brother.

Volo's Guide

Myth Drannor, City of Song

Well met again, wise readers!

Yes, 'tis Volothamp Geddarm, famous wayfarer of the Realms, "Volo" to all, at thy service.

You are most wise to consult me in all matters of life in the Realms—in particular the 'little dark secrets' rulers, guilds, and other folk of power least want you to know.

Wherefore, 'tis high time to unfold some juicy lore about the fabled City of Song. Not the Myth Drannor of old, that so many tales tell of, nor yet the fiend-haunted ruin of cracked and riven buildings spilling out treasures so magical that their blue glow could be seen for miles by night... but the re-occupied ruin of today, the refounded city.

What follows may seem tantalizingly incomplete, but I assure you that even assembling this much was both difficult and dangerous. Yet I am ever willing to brave such perils for you; place your deep trust in Volo!

Volo

FORGOTTEN REALMS

by Eric L. Boyd, with special introduction by Ed Greenwood
illustrated by Jeff Carlisle • cartography by Rob Lazzaretti

SPOILER WARNING!

This article updates the current situation in Myth Drannor to the month of Marpenoth in the Year of Risen Elfkin (1375 DR). It contains a great many spoilers for game products such as *City of the Spider Queen, Shadowdale: Scouring of the Land, Anauroch: The Sundering of the World*, and novels such as *Blackstaff*, the Last Mythal series, and the War of the Spider Queen series. Players and readers beware!

For millennia, the great forest of Cormanthor has been known as the Elven Woods, home to the Fair Folk of Cormanthyr (see the FORGOTTEN REALMS *Campaign Setting* and DRAGON #355). For nearly five centuries the mythal-clad capitol city of Cormanthyr was known as Myth Drannor, the fabled City of Song. The history of the city, from its founding as Cormanthor in –3893 DR with the summoning of the Rule Tower, to the establishment of its mythal in the Year of Soaring Stars (261 DR), to its fall in the Year of Doom (714 DR) is well established and not repeated here. (See *Lost Empires of Faerûn* for the fullest accounting.)

In the wake of the Weeping War (712–714 DR), Myth Drannor, also known as the City of Bards, the City of Beauty, the City of Love, the City of Might, and the City of Spells, became a fabled ruin, whose mighty magics perpetually tempted power-hungry individuals and sinister organizations to explore its depths. The Fair Folk of the Elven Woods did their best to guard against interlopers, particularly adventuring companies who sought only to plunder the ruins. The elven sentinels allowed only dragons seeking lairs (whom they deemed fitting guardians) to enter the city. The elves themselves stayed outside of the ruins, holding them sacred to the memory of the time they dwelt together in peace. Nonetheless, the monstrous population of Myth Drannor slowly grew, as beasts left behind sired offspring and creatures from elsewhere in the Realms reached the city via long-forgotten portals exiting into the ruins. The few bold adventurers who used magic to elude the elven guard and reach the city rarely emerged.

In the Year of the Moonfall (1344 DR), the elders of the Elven Court ordered the Retreat. Most moon elves and sun elves of Cormanthor departed for Evermeet, leaving the Elven Woods largely unguarded for the first time in centuries.

In spring of the Year of the Bloodbird (1346 DR), after two years of careful exploration of the ruined city by Banite agents, the Eighth High Imperceptor of Bane, Szchulan Darkoon, ordered the creation of a portal from the Warrior's Gate to Avernus, first layer of the Nine Hells of Baator. The Dark Lord's followers intended to call forth a limited number of devils to deal with the demons and yugoloths still lurking in the ruins, dating back to the end of the Weeping War. Their plan went awry when

Malkizid, the Branded King, intervened, causing the portal to remain open and allowing hordes of devils to enter the Realms. Myth Drannor was quickly overrun with devils, but the Banites erected a second sphere of magic encircling the mythal, keeping the legions of the Nine Hells bound within the city's ruins.

Over the next decade, agents of the Church of Bane spread tales throughout the Dragonreach and surrounding lands that Myth Drannor's treasures were ripe for the taking, hoping to unleash a horde of adventurers who would deal with the fiends inhabiting the ruins. The rape of the ruined city that followed is known as the Time of the Seizing. Beginning in the Year of the Worm (1356 DR), adventuring bands such as the Company of the Worm, the Company of the Black Buckler, the Men of the Scarlet Scimitar, the Women of the Wind, the Blue Fist, the Company of the Purple Cloak, the Glass Goblet, the Vengeful Blade, and the Company of the Cathlander poured into the ruined City of Song, only to be set upon by growing numbers of devils in the city.

The Year of the Prince (1357 DR) saw two attempts by powerful outsiders to seize the ruins. During the Time of Troubles, an avatar of the Rotting God made a concerted push to reach the city, creating Moander's Road from the ruins of Yûlash to roughly the midway point between the two ruined cities. Later that same year, in the month of Marpenoth, a possessing spirit known as Tyranthraxus briefly seized control of the entire City of Song, wrapping the ruins in a dome of force and establishing a pool of radiance (effectively a pool of raw magic, manifested as water) in the old Temple of Labelas Enoreth. Both entities were driven off by adventurers, leaving the ruins once again open for exploration.

In Uktar of the Year of the Prince, one heretofore nameless band, who later took to calling themselves the Knights of Myth Drannor, shattered the portal to Avernus and then took to guarding the ruins against interlopers, with modest success. In the decade that followed, adventurers who made it past the Knights' gauntlet confronted devils, dragons, alhoon (illithiliches), nagas, phaerimm, other adventuring companies, and countless greater perils. Many died horrible deaths, but a few escaped with ancient coins, works of art, or items of precious magic, encouraging others to follow in their wake.

In the Year of the Gauntlet (1369 DR), the Cult of the Dragon discovered a recently formed pool of radiance in the depths of Castle Cormanthor. After corrupting the pool's magic, the Followers of the Scaly Way planned to immerse Pelendralaar, an allied dracolich, into the pool and thereby give the undead horror additional powers, but brave adventurers brought the Sacred One low and destroyed the pool of radiance.

In the Year of Wild Magic (1372 DR), the Shadovar of Thultanthar, City of Shade, covered the ruined city with a shadowshell, trapping a small colony of phaerimm inside the mythal. They began a campaign to eradicate the thornbacks, but an attack by the Chosen of Mystra on Thultanthar above the sands of Anauroch forced the Shadovar to withdraw from Myth Drannor. The shades are thought to have destroyed all the phaerimm that lurked beneath the ruins, but one or two might have survived.

In the Year of Rogue Dragons (1373 DR), Narlgathra, a red wyrm, emerged from the ruins of Myth Drannor and flew south to attack Tangled Trees. She slaughtered the summertime residents, leaving only a handful of survivors to be discovered by far wandering inhabitants upon their return.

In the Year of Lightning Storms (1374 DR), in the wake of a failed assault on Evereska, the half-fiend gold elves of House Dlardrageth returned to Myth Drannor, accompanied by a legion of fey'ri liberated from the Nameless Dungeon. The Abyss-tainted elves destroyed the Morninglord's temple in the Westfields, claimed Castle Cormanthor as their seat of power, and summoned the exiled archdevil Malkizid. These efforts came to naught when Seiveril Miritar and the elven Crusade overran the City of Song, at the cost of the commander's life. Under the leadership of Ilsevele Miritar, the elves refounded Myth Drannor, only to find themselves under attack by an alliance of Zhentarim legions and the Masked Brigades (Vhaeraun-worshiping drow of House Jaelre and Clan Auzkovyn).

LOCATIONS IN MYTH DRANNOR

1. Throne of Thought
2. Army Barracks
3. Shaundakul's Throne
4. Cormyrean Embassy (formerly House Dahast)
5. House of Song
6. Castle Cormanthor
7. Windsong Tower (ruin, detailed in *Anauroch*)
8. House Orangyl
9. Glyrryrl's Pool
10. Alicorn Inn
11. House Dlardrageth
12. House of Antiquities

MYTH DRANNOR

The refounded City of Song is more armed camp under siege than thriving city. The populace is dominated by warriors, not commoners, almost all of whom fought in the Crusade and now populate the ranks of the Army of Myth Drannor. Most visitors to the city come under armed guard as members of a merchant caravan. The city's primary exports are antiquities looted from the ruins—broken statuary, old coins, gems, jewelry, and magic. While Myth Drannor's forges produce

a steady stream of arms and armaments, nearly all such items are purchased by the Army of Myth Drannor to supplement its troops.

The city's elven population is growing slowly, as small bands of wandering wood elves native to Cormanthor and a handful of immigrants from Evermeet settle in the city. The half-elf and human populations are growing by leaps and bounds. The former group is composed of Deepingdale emigrants who desire to settle in the city of their ancestors, while the latter group is driven largely by the economic hardship afflicting Hillsfar and Sembia. Other goodly races are slowly trickling into the city as well, drawn by a sense of adventure or a strong need for their skills. Simultaneously, the population of fiends, humanoids, alhoons, nagas, and phaerimm is melting away, as the monstrous legions that long dominated the city flee for parts more welcoming to their kind.

Given the current hostilities that enmesh the City of Song and the fact that the Crusade/Army of Myth Drannor never really stopped fighting even after the city was won, Myth Drannor currently does not differentiate between military and law enforcement tasks. Therefore, crime generally falls into three categories: looting, espionage, and sabotage. While the looting of antiquities is officially banned, in practice it is widely tolerated as it forms the backbone of the wartime economy. Most residents denounce the wholesale stripping of ruins, but none can afford not to at least supplement their income with a few discrete sales of choice artifacts at irregular intervals. Infiltration is largely the province of the Masked Brigades and Zhentarim spies, who excel at espionage and acts of sabotage. While rare, random acts of violence and outright theft are largely the province of power groups driven from the ruins, including dark nagas, fey'ri, and alhoons, either directly or through their minions.

The city itself is a mix of conventional buildings and tree structures favored by the Fair Folk. Centuries of neglect and abuse left the city in ruins, with wide swaths of the city given over completely to rubble and other sections reduced to buildings that are a pale shadow of their former glory. Since the Crusade reclaimed the City of Song, the new inhabitants have knocked down many buildings and cleared the rubble from much of the city. The minority of buildings that could be saved are being rebuilt, but progress is hampered by the ongoing war.

In the vanguard of those seeking to refound Myth Drannor, numerous churches have established shrines or refurbished existing temples. Shrines dedicated to members of the Seldarine are scattered through the city, and the church of Labelas Enoreth is busy restoring the Throne of Thought. The most popular elven faiths include the churches of Corellon Larethian, Shevarash, and Solonor Thelandira. Among the N'Tel'Quess (non-elves), the most prominent faiths include Lathander, Oghma, and Shaundakul, and all three churches are rebuilding their respective temples. Shrines to Mielikki, Red Knight, Tempus, and Waukeen are also scattered through the city.

Myth Drannor (Small City): Conventional (military); AL CG; 15,000 gp limit; Assets 5,587,500 gp; Population 7,450; Mixed (79% elf, 9% half-elf, 5% human, 3% halfling, 2% gnome, 2% other).

MYTH DRANNOR'S MYTHAL

Myth Drannor's mythal was raised in the Year of Soaring Stars (261 DR) by Mythanthor and many others. It spanned a far wider range than the actual city, centered on Castle Cormanthor. The mythal became corrupted in the centuries following the Weeping War (712 DR–714 DR). Under Malkizid's tutelage, Lady Sarya Dlardrageth reshaped the mythal's properties, only to have them undone by Araevin Teshurr, Grand Mage of the newly refounded City of Song, who has reshaped the mythal in his own image. The current properties of the mythal include the ability to sustain those within against hunger and age, taming of violent weather effects, and a bevy of other protective abilities to defend the city's buildings and populace. See *Lost Empires of Faerûn* for more on mythals and how to create them.

DAILY LIFE IN MYTH DRANNOR

Although the City of Song is enmeshed in an ongoing war with Zhentil Keep and the Masked Brigades, open combat within the city limits is rare, as most of the fighting takes place in the surrounding woodlands. Daily life is a mix of armed military exercises, salvaging, debris clearing, rebuilding, and aiding in unloading and distributing the much-needed wears of merchant caravans bringing arms, armaments, and supplies. Violence, although rare, typically takes the form of an unexpected explosion due to sabotage or a monster unexpectedly erupting from an unsecured ruin.

A group of adventurers walking through the city encounter regular checkpoints at major intersections staffed by soldiers in the Army of Myth Drannor. Traffic on the main roads is light, but regular. For safety reasons, most individuals travel in groups of two or more, so solitary passersby are unusual (and draw attention). Open shops are rare, as most store owners sell their wares by appointment or during the few hours each day they are not otherwise engaged in supporting the war effort or defending the city.

EBERRON

DRAGONMARKS

ECHOES OF THE MOURNING

by Keith Baker • illustrated by James Zhang

Some say the Day of Mourning was the darkest day in the history of Khorvaire. I disagree. I have seen the land beyond the mists, seen wonders and terrors I could never have imagined. But the Last War was full of horrors... evil done by our own hands. Shadukar. The Crying Fields. The massacres in Darguun. It is the fear of the Mourning that has brought an end to these atrocities. It is the common threat that has forced the warring children to peace. I know many who wish to unravel the mystery of the Mourning, or worse yet, to find a way to harness its power. Before you undertake such a task, I urge you to walk through the ruins of Shadukar, to spend a night in the Crying Fields. Should you solve the mystery of the Mourning, these are the gifts you will give to Khorvaire.

—Tasker, Exoriate of House Sivis

The Mourning is a shadow hanging over Khorvaire. An entire nation was destroyed and worse still, transformed into a realm of horrors more terrifying than even Droaam. The Mourning killed more than a million people and created hundreds of thousands of refugees scattered across Khorvaire. Fear brought an end to the Last War—sheer shock and terror. During the century of war, most soldiers clung to the idea that the struggle would lead to a new and better Galifar. Now the heart of the old kingdom is gone, replaced by an abomination. And no one knows why. No one knows if it could happen again. Even in this time of peace looms a feeling of impending doom, uncertainty, and lingering dread. In some cases, this has led to hedonism or a collapse in moral values, as those who believe the world is ending have no fear of the consequences of their actions. Others believe the Mourning is the wrath of the gods and have become ever more austere and ascetic in the hopes their purity might save their nation. Both players and DM should consider the impact of the Mourning when designing characters. Has the Mourning touched the character in any meaningful way? Is he afraid of it? Fascinated by it? Or does he believe it was a freak event, a piece of history best forgotten? How does he feel about the Cyran refugees found across Khorvaire? Does he pity them, sympathizing with these people who have lost everything without even knowing why? Does he despise them, hating his monarch for sheltering these people who once fought against him? Or is he a Cyran himself, a man whose home and family were destroyed by this magical cataclysm? How does he live with the horrors he has seen?

Cyran nationality provides many opportunities normally impossible for PCs: a noble knight born into a family of tremendous wealth; a wizard and heir to one of the grandest arcane libraries in Khorvaire; a rogue born into the most powerful crime guild in Metrol. Gold, arcane knowledge, criminal influence—all has been stripped away by the Mourning, leaving only the bitter memory. Of course, there is always the chance that some measure of this past glory can be regained. Perhaps the mystic library remains intact in the heart of the Mournland, but can the PC recover his birthright? Can the young crimelord find other survivors of his old guild and rebuild his family in Breland, Aundair, or Stormreach? The Mourning might have taken away everything from a player character, but such a tragedy gives the player an immediate goal—although one that might take years to accomplish.

CAUSE AND EFFECT

The *Eberron Campaign Setting* does not reveal the cause of the Mourning. Nor does *The Forge of War*, the

sourcebook dedicated to the Last War, but consider the following possibilities.

- The Mourning was caused by an experimental weapon created by House Cannith. They are still trying to locate and recover the artifact.
- The destruction of Cyre was the first stirring of the progenitor wyrm Khyber, long bound within Eberron. Soon, the Dragon Below will shatter the entire world. The broken shards of Eberron will rise to join Siberys in the sky, while those few who remain will struggle for survival on the new world below.
- The Mourning was caused by the Chamber, using the same magic that shattered Xen'drik. The dragons have plans for Khorvaire and are willing to sacrifice millions of lives in pursuit of their goals.
- Cyran forces recovered a weapon from Xen'drik—a doomsday weapon created during the last days of the Age of Giants. The artificers studying the device accidentally triggered it, and now it is building up energy for a second, more powerful blast.
- The Mourning resulted from the long-term buildup of magical energies from the spells and weapons used in the Last War.
- The event was the aftershock accompanying the release of a mighty rakshasa rajah, one of the great lords of the Age of Demons. After a hundred thousand years in prison, the fiend felt content to watch the world for the last four years as he assembled his forces. Wherever he goes, he will surely spread the Mourning in his wake.
- The Mourning was the result of an attempt to open a massive gate between Eberron and Xoriat, engineered both by the daelkyr trapped in Khyber and the greater powers of the realm of madness. Although it failed, it did allow one of the daelkyr to ascend to the Mournland itself, and even now he prepares a second attack.

Any one of these—or more than one—could be true. Each idea has a different effect on the future, as every nation searches for the cause of the Mourning. If it is a weapon, what happens if one nation acquires it? If, on the other hand, sages and artificers can conclusively prove there is no threat of a second Mourning, can anything stop the nations from returning to war? For now, the Mourning acts as a siren call for adventurers. No nation can afford to pass up a chance to solve this mystery, but if someone does find the answer, the consequences might be far worse for Khorvaire than the Mourning itself. If the PCs discover the truth, what do they do with this terrible knowledge?

While the search for the answer is a simple source of adventure, an uglier option exists: the renewed threat.

What happens if a second Mourning occurs—a smaller, more controlled Mourning that simply targets Sharn, or Fairhaven, or Korth? What if another nation holds the secret? Or worse, a cult of the Dragon Below or some other radical group? What if no nation can control the power behind the Mourning because it occurred naturally—and will again, ever more frequently, in years to come? So far, fear of the Mourning has kept delegates at the peace table, but a new Mourning could drive them back to war. And with the end of the world looming, no atrocity would be too great.

TRAVELING THROUGH MADNESS

Five Nations and the *Player's Guide to Eberron* discuss some of the wonders found when exploring the Mournland. Many people have heard of the pristine corpses, of the Glass Plateau, and Glowing Chasm, but these only begin to touch on the horrors of the land. Here are a few more challenges explorers might face.

Memories. Just as the power of the Mourning gave insubstantial spells true life, it can give material form to powerful memories. Explorers might stumble upon a pitched battle between two armies, a Cyran patrol struggling to escape the oncoming mists, or a village seemingly untouched by the horror. As far as the explorers can tell, these "people"—memes—are real. They can fight, and they have all the abilities of their originals along with an immunity to mind-affecting effects and divination magic (they simply don't show up; they are invisible to all forms of scrying). The memes have the full knowledge their originators possessed—up until the Day of Mourning. They believe it is still the Day of Mourning—they are trapped, doomed to relive the same day over and over. The actions of the PCs might change the course of that day, but when the moment of the Mourning comes, the scene resets and begins anew, 24 hours in the past. While solid, memes simply fade from existence if they travel too far from their original posts, as does any equipment or goods taken from them. Some memes can see explorers as they are, but many work newcomers into historical events; adventurers might awaken in the night to a sergeant calling them to battle, acting as if the PCs belong in his squad.

More often than not, an encounter with memes is simply unnerving, but if the memes perceive the PCs as enemies they can quickly become dangerous. Alternatively, an interaction with memes can provide an opportunity to solve a mystery of the past—for example, to locate a forgotten treasure hidden by a group of soldiers or reveal the identity of an enemy spy still at large in the wider world.

The Silent City. The last sound heard in the city of Tronish was a wail of despair as the mists swept over the land. Today, magical *silence* blankets the entire city. Within its walls, a visitor can hear no sound or cast spells requiring verbal components. The clothes and belongings of the inhabitants lay scattered about, with anything made of flesh and blood seemingly evaporated. Shadows and greater shadows linger, spread around the city and hungering for the vital energies of the living. Perhaps the remnants of the people of Tronnish, these lost souls present a threat to adventurers who merely wish to communicate.

As if shadows didn't present enough challenge to explorers, a daelkyr recently returned to the surface and made a section of the silent city his fortress. Using telepathy to communicate with his illithid lieutenants, the daelkyr is assembling an army of horrors in Tronnish: living spells, Mournborn monsters, and stranger creatures of his own creation.

For an added challenge, a DM can prevent players from speaking while their characters remain within the silent city. Players must write down all of their actions and pass them to the DM for resolution. They might communicate with one another using pantomime, writing materials

MOURNING MUTATE [ABERRANT]

You survived the Mourning, but it left its mark upon your body. While one feature is especially noteworthy, you might have any number of purely cosmetic oddities. Unusual skin, hair, and eye colors are common, as are strange rashes or webs of scars. The form of a warped feature is up to you and the DM. It might be out of proportion, or it might be truly monstrous in nature.

Benefit: You gain a physical feature that grants you a racial bonus on one type of check or action. The bonus must be chosen from the following list.

Mourning Feature	Benefit
Disturbing sores	+3 on saving throws vs. poison and disease (see below).
Hideous features	+3 on Intimidate checks
Spongy flesh	DR 3/— vs. nonlethal damage
Unnaturally flexible	+3 on Escape Artist
Warped ears	+3 on Listen checks
Warped eyes	+3 on Spot checks
Warped limb	Limb deals +2 damage with unarmed strikes

Special: This feat is treated as Aberration Blood (*Lords of Madness*) for purposes of meeting feat prerequisites.

If you have disturbing sores and successfully save against a disease by 3 or fewer points, you avoid its effects.

You may only take this feat at 1st level.

(if they've brought anything to write with and have time to use it), or other forms of nonverbal communication.

Horrors of the Past. The memes represent only one example of memories preserved by the Mourning. Other images of the past remain trapped within corpses themselves: a necromancer can touch an amplified form of these memories using *speak with dead*. A living creature who touches such a corpse must make a DC 25 Will save or become overwhelmed with the madness of the victim of the Mourning, the horrible sensations of the last moments of life. This takes the form of a *confusion* effect. The victim may make a new saving throw every 1d4 rounds to overcome the effect, with a cumulative +1 bonus for each check. If the victim survives, a chance exists that he retains some strong image from the experience, which could play a role in an adventure to come. He might even incorporate a full fragment of the victim's personality, such as feelings for a loved one who survived the Mourning.

THE MOURNBORN

The Mourning killed the vast majority of the creatures caught in the mists. Some survived but transformed into monsters—things with little or no mental or physical resemblance to their former selves, beasts who now roam the broken kingdom. A few, however, walked out of the mists; people who somehow survived the Mourning with their memories intact. While they resemble the people they were before the Mourning, something within them has changed: They have become Mournborn.

Mournborn can come from any race, and the affliction is not limited to humanoids—any intelligent, living creature can become Mournborn, and at least one Mournborn dragon exists in the world. Two things define the Mournborn: They possess an unusual reaction to healing magics and they utterly lack empathy. The Mournborn are pure sociopaths, fascinated by the suffering of others and always placing their own wellbeing above any other concern. They are irrevocably evil in alignment—not even magical effects can change this.

A Mournborn might choose to do good deeds for a time or even play the role of the hero, but this doesn't change his fundamental nature. At his core, he simply can't identify with any creature aside from other Mournborn. There is simply something wrong with other creatures: their body language offends him, they smell wrong, or they remind him of insects—stupid drones waiting to be annihilated. He is a survivor. He has seen the end of the world and walked away from it. Soon the Mourning will come again, and those who survive it will be his brothers. Until then, all non-Mournborn are simply walking corpses; try as he might, he can't think of them in any other way.

Some Mournborn possess physical mutations, as represented by the Mourning Mutate feat. Others seem normal but have developed unusual powers. Warlocks, wilders, barbarians, beguilers, sorcerers, and favored souls (using the domains of the Dragon Below) are all common among the Mournborn. The spell components used by Mournborn spontaneous spellcasters usually differ radically from normal spellcasters, involving ululating howls, whispered gibberish, and graceful yet disturbing gestures—and sometimes they even change from casting to casting (the spellcaster simply *knows* what to do and acts on pure instinct). Despite this oddity, a character can still use Spellcraft to identify a spell cast by a Mournborn, based on the visual manifestations of the magic.

While evil by nature, it's still possible to have a Mournborn PC. He can't change what he is. He can't conjure sympathy for others. But he can still *try*, fighting a doomed battle to change his basic nature. Of course, he might simply desire gold or influence, playing the noble role because it serves his purpose. The DM must decide if a greater power influences the actions of the Mournborn or if they are simply sociopaths with a common bond.

 by Andy Collins • illustrated by Andrew Hou

OFFICIAL ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

This month, the Sage takes a look at the end of all things. Send your questions for the Sage to **askdnd@wizards.com**.

All Good Things...

For obvious reasons, this is the last time that Sage Advice will appear in the pages of DRAGON.

As any long-time reader of DRAGON knows, the column is one of the longest-running features in the magazine's history. The first Sage Advice column was written by Jean Wells and appeared in issue #31 (cover date November 1979). The author most closely associated with the column, however, is long-time sage Skip Williams, who helped desperate players and DMs across three editions of the game.

I've been fortunate enough to add thirty-seven columns of my own to this fine tradition. I thank those who came before me for lighting the way, and also the kind editors at DRAGON for filtering the deluge of questions each month.

But don't worry—your rules stumpers need not go unanswered! Sage Advice lives on in its new home at **wizards.com/dnd** (actually, the Sage has been splitting time between these two domiciles for quite some time now, and the commute's been killing him). Every weekday, a new question and answer is posted, and these answers are collected in the FAQ just like those that have seen print in these pages.

Thanks for reading, and thanks for your great questions.

—Andy Collins
The Sage

If the creator or target of an effect dies, does the effect end as well?

As a general rule, no, although the DM must be ready to apply reasonable exceptions to this.

If a wizard casts *hold person* on you and then is killed, the *hold person* spell doesn't end. It also doesn't end if you're killed, although that's usually of moot concern to you.

What exactly is a death effect? Do all effects and events that cause instant death qualify as death effects?

A "death effect" is a category of effect much like fear or mind-affecting.

Only those effects specifically described in their text entries as death effects qualify as such. For example, spells with the [Death] descriptor, such as *finger of death*, are all death effects.

Not everything that causes instant death qualifies as a death effect. For example, even though the decapitation effect of a vorpal blade likely kills the target, it is not considered a "death effect."

Can a character use a Bluff check to feign death (and would a Heal check or a Spot check be the used to see through his trickery)? If so, when he then attacks is his opponent flat-footed?

The rules are silent on this issue, so it'd be up to the DM to determine how (or if) this tactic might work.

Since you generally can't take actions when it isn't your turn (other than speech and immediate actions), "feigning death" in reaction to being hit isn't possible.

What counts as a single attack for the massive damage rule (*Player's Handbook*, 145)? Do all the rays of a *scorching ray* spell count as a single attack, since they're coming from a single spell? What about the arrows from a Manyshot attack?

The easiest rule of thumb to use is that if all the damage comes as the result of a single attack roll or a single failed saving throw, it's treated as being a single attack for the purpose of the massive damage rule.

For example, every *scorching ray* requires a separate attack roll, so they don't count as a single attack.

All the arrows from a Manyshot attack are treated as a single attack, since it's only one attack roll.

If the effect doesn't require an attack roll (such as *magic missile*), the DM must use his best judgment (and the effect's description) to determine whether it counts as a single attack.

What kind of action is the assassin's death attack?

The assassin delivers his death attack with a single attack, which may be an attack action (standard action), the initial attack of a full attack action (a full-round action), or even an attack of opportunity.

What happens to an animal companion or familiar when its master dies?

The rules don't specifically state what happens to one of these creatures if its master dies. It's probably easiest

to treat it as returning to a normal creature of its kind when its master dies, losing all abilities and adjustments gained from being an animal companion or a familiar.

If its creator returns to life, the animal companion or familiar automatically regains its abilities (according to the master's new level, if level loss is involved), as long as the master still qualifies to have an animal companion or familiar.

What happens to a psicrystal when its creator dies?

The rules don't specifically state what happens to a psicrystal if its creator dies. It's probably easiest to treat it as being destroyed when its creator dies, but restored if its creator returns to life (as long as the creator still qualifies for the feat).

If my character is killed while wearing a *ring of regeneration*, do I lose a level when it brings me back to life an hour later?

The question is moot, because it can't happen.

A *ring of regeneration* only works for a "living wearer" (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, 232), so it won't help you if you're killed. No healing, no return from death, nothing.

If a character dies while "on the clock" for a disease or poison, does the clock keep running while he's dead? That is, does he need to keep making saves against these effects while he's dead?

Diseases and poisons normally don't have any effect on dead creatures, so the durations of such effects would be suspended while you're dead.

Since the *raise dead* spell cures (normal) poisons and diseases as part of bringing the person back to life, any active poisons or diseases lingering on the corpse would automatically end without requiring additional saving throws. Of course, this wouldn't restore any damage, drain, or other effects already in place from those sources.

If such an effect could conceivably continue to affect a dead creature, the DM must determine whether or not the clock keeps running on such effects, and what exactly that means in regards to saving throws.

If a character with negative levels is dead when the time comes to roll his Fortitude saving throw to determine if they become permanent, does he roll the save or does it wait until he's alive?

If you're dead when the 24-hour clock elapses, you don't have to roll the Fortitude saves at that time. You have to roll them immediately upon being returned to life, however, and if you've lost a level as part of that process you would use your new base Fortitude save bonus (if different).

What special qualities are retained after death?

It's simplest to rule that a dead creature retains any special qualities that don't require activation, particularly those related to resistance or immunity to certain effects.

A creature immune to conjuration (healing) spells in life, for example, is still immune to those when it's dead (so it can't benefit from *raise dead*). A creature with resistance to fire should be difficult to immolate, and a creature with DR 10/bludgeoning should be difficult to chop up with axes.

When a summoned creature with the death throes ability dies (such as a balor), what happens if it is "killed" in battle? Since it's summoned and doesn't really die, does its death throes ability function? And if so, does its death throes ability occur before or after it returns from whence it came?

Any effect triggered by a creature's death is triggered even if the creature is summoned. It occurs before the creature returns to where it came from.

Does an undead creature stay undead after it has been defeated? For example, in a recent adventure an evil cleric turned a PC into a zombie, then the party destroyed their former comrade. Now they want to cast *raise dead* on him, but if he's still undead it won't work and they would have to pay for a *resurrection* spell instead.

It's not that he's "still" undead that matters for *raise dead*, it's that he was undead when he was last "killed or destroyed."

If your buddy dies, gets turned into a zombie, and then gets destroyed, you must use *resurrection* to bring him back to life like he was before he was turned into a zombie.

You can't use *raise dead* in this circumstance, because it doesn't work on creatures who died while they were undead.

Does time spent as an undead creature count against a character's normal lifespan?

No.

If you become undead, but then are resurrected, you'd pick up life at the same age as when you died.

Do *magic jar* and *trap the soul* work on a ghost?

Neither spell indicates that it affects only living creatures, so ghosts would be vulnerable to both spells.

If you use *magic jar* to occupy the "body" of a ghost, you'd occupy its incorporeal ghostly form (not its corpse).

Similarly, using *trap the soul* on a ghost has no effect on its corpse, only on its current (ghost) form.

What happens to a ghost if it is destroyed in a way that doesn't reduce its hit points to 0, such as from a successful turn check from a cleric with double the ghost's Hit Dice or an *undeath to death* spell? Do such effects prevent a ghost from rejuvenating?

No.

The rejuvenation special quality of the ghost template makes no reference to being reduced to 0 hp: "A ghost that would otherwise be destroyed returns to its old haunts with a successful level check..." (*Monster Manual*, 118).

Therefore, it doesn't matter how the ghost is destroyed; it always rejuvenates if it succeeds on the level check unless you set right whatever prevents it from resting in peace.

If a vampire is destroyed via turning undead or another effect that doesn't specifically reduce it to 0 hp, does it become gaseous and return to its coffin or is it completely destroyed? What about if it's disintegrated entirely?

A vampire only turns gaseous when reduced to 0 or fewer hp. Other methods that utterly destroy a creature without reducing it to 0 hp also destroy a vampire.

The *disintegrate* spell first reduces a creature to 0 hp, so a vampire turns gaseous if disintegrated.

How much damage can a dead body take before it's completely destroyed?

That's entirely up to the DM.

If your characters insist on beating a dead horse, use the hit point values for objects as a guideline.

Dragon

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 by James Lafond Sutter • illustrated by Jeff Carlisle

BODY MODIFICATIONS

Presented below are several different ideas to help you incorporate beneficial body alterations into your game and make your character stand out in a crowd. Aside from tattoos, all the modifications listed here require the assistance of a professional to complete properly—usually someone with the ability to cast *restoration*.

Attempting to make the following body modifications requires the creator spend 8 uninterupted hours and make a Craft (body modifications) or Heal check to complete the operation successfully. See the description of each modification for its DC. Failing this check means the operation is unsuccesful and exposes the subject to filth fever (the subject still gets to make saving throws, as normal, albeit at a –2 penalty). Unless otherwise noted, each procedure deals 1d6 points of damage per level or HD of the character. This damage must be healed magically in order to keep the body from rejecting or healing over the modification. If this damage is allowed to heal naturally over time, the subject loses the benefits of the body modification when brought back to full health and must undergo the procedure again.

COMBAT MOD

Combat body modifications take two general forms.

Weapon: A fighter might choose to have a punch dagger permanently emerging from the skin above his wrist or a monk might elect to install silver and cold iron caps on her knuckles (which count as silver or cold iron gauntlets). Weapon combat

mods cost double the weapon's nonmagical cost (include masterwork and special material costs, but not costs for any magical enhancements). Only light and one-handed weapons can be attached, and only to the subject's arms. Weapons attached in this way are used normally, as manufactured-weapon attacks. Implanted weapons themselves function normally, although the wielder cannot use them two-handed. Weapon combat mods cannot be disarmed or dropped (but they can be sundered normally) and they are always considered drawn.

Attaching a bludgeoning weapon has a Craft (body modifications) or Heal DC of 20. A piercing weapon is DC 25, while a slashing weapon's DC is 30.

Armor: Much less common is the permanent application of armor, in which the crafter magically burns and warps flesh to adhere to small steel plates. A character wishing to gird himself in this manner gains an armor bonus up to +8, at a cost of 300 gp and 5 pounds of encumbrance per point of armor bonus. Armor combat mod has a maximum Dex bonus of 9 minus the armor bonus, an armor check penalty equal to the armor bonus (masterwork armor reduces this penalty by 1 as normal), and an arcane spell failure chance of 5% per point of armor bonus. Up to a +3 armor bonus counts as light armor and allows normal speed, an armor bonus of +4 to +6 counts as medium armor, and an armor bonus of +7 or +8 counts as heavy armor.

This armor can be spiked, constructed from special materials, and made magical, all for the normal costs of such treatments. Removing an armor combat mod deals 1d6 points of damage per level or HD of the character and renders the plates useless. Characters choosing this modification may not wear any other armor, although they may still use shields.

Attaching light armor requires a DC 20 Craft (body modifications) or Heal check. Medium armor has a DC of 25, while heavy armor's DC is 30.

SKINCASTER [GENERAL]

You copy all spells directly to your skin instead of a spellbook.

Prerequisite: Prepares spells from a spellbook.

Benefit: You use your own body as a spellbook and need only be able to read your skin in order to prepare spells. Transferring a spell to your skin costs 100 gp per spell level of the spell.

Due to the painful nature of both these operations and the potential for social stigma, most who undergo these procedures wait until they can afford to use high-quality magical weapons or materials. Note that most lawful or good civilized places frown upon combat mods and characters with them invite extra scrutiny from law enforcement.

EMBEDDED HOLY SYMBOL

Some especially fanatical clerics have their holy symbols surgically implanted just beneath the outer layer of skin on their hands, arms, chests, or faces. Such implants raise the skin, showing in perfect relief the symbol beneath. Such a holy symbol must be made from metal (usually silver) and costs 100 gp. Clerics who choose this path sometimes report their symbols ache any time they start to stray from their chosen alignments.

Embedding a holy symbol requires a DC 15 Craft (body modifications) or Heal check.

EXTRA BODY SLOT

Although viewed as extreme by many, body modification is occasionally used to give a character access to an additional magic item body slot. A small wondrous item (no larger than dagger) is inserted into an incision as far from other body slots as possible, generally beneath the ribs or along the thigh. The item functions normally, even if another item already occupies its normal body slot. This procedure, however, has grave drawbacks, as the overlapping and conflicting magical fields stress the body and reduce the subject's Constitution score by 2 points for as long as the item remains within the character's body. Only rings, rods, and wondrous items crafted specifically for this purpose can be used. They cost 1–1/2 times the normal price. Removing an item from an extra body slot requires a procedure that deals 1d6 points of damage per level or HD of the character.

Implanting an extra body slot requires a DC 30 Craft (body modifications) or Heal check.

LIVING SPELLBOOK

The Skincaster feat allows a wizard to tattoo new spells directly onto her skin instead of her spellbook. Unlike the Tattoo Magic feat (*Races of Faerun*, 170), the wizard must still prepare spells scribed in this manner as normal. If an opponent attempts to use *erase* on your tattooed spells you are allowed a Fortitude save to resist the spell.

In order to gain the benefits of this procedure, you must take the Skincaster feat. Scribing spells onto your flesh requires a DC 10 Craft (body modifications) or Heal check.

SKIN POCKETS

Instead of swallowing or otherwise concealing contraband, brave, desperate, or merely eccentric characters might elect to create a skin pocket: a spot where the outer layer of skin is flayed, blister-like, from the flesh beneath it but left intact save for a small opening. This cavity can hold anything up to the size of a dagger. Magical healing closes this pocket with a thin layer of skin, leaving only a swollen patch of flesh capable of escaping all but the most careful scrutiny (granting a +6 bonus on Sleight of Hand checks made to conceal the items). Accessing the pocket requires 1 point of slashing damage.

Creating a skin pocket deals the standard 1 point of damage per level or HD of the character and requires a DC 20 Craft (body modifications) or Heal check. Reusing the same skin pocket reduces the total creation damage by 1 point (to a minium of 1).

by Amber E. Scott • illustrated by Steve Ellis

ARCANE

WIZARD GUIDE

This guide employs charts, rules clarifications, suggestions, and rulebook references to enhance and ease the playability of the wizard.

SPELLS

A wizard must prepare her spells from her spellbook every day.

- She must rest for 8 hours before preparing her spells. She need not sleep every minute of this rest time, but she must remain quiet and cannot engage in combat, spellcasting, skill use, conversation, movement, or any other task which requires physical action or concentration.
- A *ring of sustenance* does not affect the amount of time a wizard must rest before preparing spells.
- If the wizard's rest is interrupted, add 1 hour to the amount of time she must rest. When the wizard prepares her spells, any spells cast in the last 8 hours count against her total daily limit.
- The wizard requires peace and quiet, relatively stable surroundings, and 1 hour to prepare spells. Disruption, such as an injury or failing a saving throw, disrupts the wizard's spell preparation.
- Preparing less than her full daily allotment of spells takes less than 1 hour, but always at least 15 minutes.
- A wizard may leave some spell slots unfilled and study her spellbook to fill them later in the day.
- A wizard can only cast spells she has prepared.
- A wizard gains bonus spells based on her Intelligence. If a wizard wears an item that increases her Intelligence while resting, and all through her daily preparation time, she gains extra bonus spells based on her heightened Intelligence. She loses these bonus spell slots if she loses or removes the item granting her the Intelligence bonus.

Feats: Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Greater Spell Focus, Greater Spell Penetration, Improved Counterspell, Magical Aptitude, Spell Focus, Spell Mastery, Spell Penetration (*Player's Handbook*); Arcane Consumption, Arcane Toughness, Dampen Spell, Elven Spell Lore, Vatic Gaze (*Player's Handbook II*); Ascetic Mage, Extraor-

SPELLBOOK

Pages at 1st-level	
0-level spells	19 pages
1st-level spells	3 pages +1 per Int bonus
Blank	78 pages –1 per Int bonus
Total	100 pages

Adding Spells

- Costs 100 gp per page
- 1 page per spell level
- Automatically gain 2 spells per level at not cost
- Add additional spells: Spellcraft DC 15 + spell level; +2 bonus on specialty school

Sell Value

- 50 gp per scribed page
- Full spellbook is worth 5,000 gp

FAMILIARS

Master Class Level	Natural Armor Adj.	Int	Special
1st–2nd	+1	6	Alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link
3rd–4th	+2	7	Deliver touch spells
5th–6th	+3	8	Speak with master
7th–8th	+4	9	Speak with animals of its kind
9th–10th	+5	10	—
11th–12th	+6	11	Spell resistance
13th–14th	+7	12	Scry on familiar
15th–16th	+8	13	—
17th–18th	+9	14	—
19th–20th	+10	15	—

dinary Concentration, Extraordinary Spell Aim, Mobile Spellcasting (*Complete Adventurer*); Arcane Mastery, Battle Caster, Extra Slot, Extra Spell, Innate Spell, Ranged Spell Specialization, Touch Spell Specialization (*Complete Arcane*); Arcane Disciple, Spell Focus (Chaos, Evil, Good, Law) (*Complete Divine*); Alacritous Cogitation, Battlecaster Defense, Battlecaster Offense, Energy Gestalt, Ranged Recall, Residual Magic, Somatic Weaponry, reserve feats (*Complete Mage*).

Prestige Classes: Arcane archer, arcane trickster, archmage, eldritch knight, mystic theurge (*Dungeon Master's Guide*); alienist, argent savant, blood magus, elemental savant, enlightened fist, fatespinner, geometer, initiate of the sevenfold veil, mage of the Arcane Order, master transmogrifist, mindbender, wayfarer guide, wild mage (*Complete Arcane*); daggerspell mage (*Complete Adventurer*); divine oracle, geomancer, rainbow servant, void disciple (*Complete Divine*); abjurant champion, eldritch theurge, holy scourge, nightmare spinner, ultimate magus, unseen seer, wild soul (*Complete Mage*).

IMPROVED FAMILIAR

Sources: *Complete Scoundrel* (CS), *Complete Warrior* (CW), *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* (FRCS), *Player's Guide to Faerûn* (PF), *Races of Faerûn* (RF), *Serpent Kingdoms* (SK), and *Tome and Blood* (TB).

Familiar	Alignment	Caster Level	Source
Badger	N	3rd	CS
Beholderkin, eyeball[1]	NE	5th	FRCS
Cat, tressym[2]	N	5th	FRCS
Deathfang[3]	NE	9th	RF
Formian worker	LN	7th	FRCS
Imp	LE	7th	FRCS
Jaculi[4]	CE	5th	SK
Lizard, spitting crawler[2]	N	3rd	SK
Lynx[3]	N	3rd	RF
Mlarraun[4]	N	5th	SK
Monstrous centipede, Small	N	2nd	CS
Monstrous scorpion, Small	N	3rd	CS
Monstrous spider, Small	N	4th	CS
Muckdweller[4]	LE	5th	SK
Night hunter bat[1]	NE	5th	FRCS
Osquip[3]	NE	5th	RF
Pseudodragon	NG	7th	FRCS
Quasit	CE	7th	FRCS
Shocker lizard	N	5th	FRCS
Snake, flying[3]	N	3rd	RF
Snake, glacier[4]	N	3rd	SK
Snake, tree python[4]	CE	3rd	SK
Snake, whipsnake[4]	N	3rd	SK
Stirge	N	5th	FRCS
Vargouille[5]	NE	6th	CS
Viper, Medium	N	3rd	CS

1 Located in *Monster Manual Appendix: Monsters of Faerûn.*
2 Located in *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting.*
3 Located in *Races of Faerûn.*
4 Located in *Serpent Kingdoms.*
5 Vargouilles summoned as familiars do not possess the kiss supernatural ability.

SPELLBOOK

A wizard's spellbook has 100 pages, costs 15 gp (blank), and weighs 3 pounds.

- A 1st-level wizard's spellbook contains all nineteen 0-level spells (cantrips) and three 1st-level spells (plus one additional 1st-level spell per Intelligence bonus).
- A wizard cannot cast spells directly out of her spellbook, as if it were a scroll.
- A wizard must have her spellbook available in order to prepare spells, except for *read magic*—which she can always prepare—and any spells affected by the Spell Mastery feat.
- A wizard can scribe spells from a scroll or another spellbook into her own.

by F. Wesley Schneider • illustrated by Jason Engle

DIVINE

Forgotten Faiths

Churches and temples rise and fall, just as do all works of men. Faiths that spanned realms one generation are the half-forgotten superstitions of the next, and deities once feared and exalted become myths and memories. But as long as there are those who remember the old ways and keep their faith alive, these aged gods and religions never die. Presented here are six cast-off creeds drawn from D&D's past editions, resurrected to work their deities' will once more.

Domains referenced herein can be found either in the *Player's Handbook* or the System Reference Document.

EZRA

Demigod (Lawful Neutral)

In her church's teachings, Ezra was once a mortal champion who sacrificed herself—either her mortal form or her greater divinity—to enter the Demiplane of Dread and defend the people there. Much of the goddess's history is unclear, as the majority of the church's lore stems from the visions of one man, Yakov Dilisnya, a scion of a family steeped in infamy and betrayal. Regardless of the church's questionable origins, Ezra's anchorites—as her clerics are known—have done much to order and defend the domains of the Core and beyond, even if the source of their powers is unclear. The Church of Ezra has four distinct wings, one order for each alignment drawn to the goddess's worship. The bastions of these orders are found in Mordentshire (lawful good), Port-a-Lucine (neutral), and Nevuchar Springs (lawful evil), but all bow to the authority of the Great Cathedral in Levkarest (lawful neutral).

Ezra's symbol is the silhouette of a black longsword on a white kite shield.

Portfolio: Protection, healing, order.

Domains: Good, Healing, Law, Protection.

THE GUARDIAN OF DEAD GODS

Lesser God (Lawful Neutral)

The enigmatic being now known as the Guardian of Dead Gods once belonged to the Pharonic Pantheon, where he was known as Anubis. As a deity of the dead, Anubis guided spirits from the Material Plane to the appointed planes of their rightful rewards or punishments. For countless centuries the jackal-headed god carried out this duty, until he discovered an expanse of the Astral Plane where gargantuan stone corpses floated in quiet neglect through the gray infinity. These were the bodies of dead gods, deities who had been forgotten or slain through unimaginable acts. As Anubis explored, he found mortals at work among the deific corpses, mining, pillaging, and

exploiting the one-time gods. Incensed, Anubis cast off his divinity and became something less and more. Now, as the nameless Guardian of Dead Gods, he protects the corpses of the gods, documents those among the godly dead, and researches the nature of divine death. Seemingly knowing every threat that intrudes upon the god corpses, the Guardian can appear upon any dead god to banish those who would despoil the massive corpses. Still possessing the appearance of a black, jackal-headed giant, the Guardian's role within the Pharonic Pantheon was taken up by a new Anubis. Where this deity came from or if the original Anubis somehow managed to split his power into two entities remains unknown. Careless of worshipers and thus rarely venerated, the Guardian of Dead Gods has nonetheless attracted the following of small cults throughout the Outer Planes and, particularly, on the Astral Plane.

The Guardian has no official symbol, but his cults often use images of shattered statues, gigantic silhouettes, and the broken symbols of dead gods to identify themselves.

Portfolio: Dead gods.

Domains: Death, Knowledge, Protection, Repose.

KANCHELSIS

Intermediate God (Chaotic Evil)

In the earliest days of creation, blood served as the paint with which the freshly inspired deities poured out their creative works. Upon the Material Plane, the blood of gods took the forms of new worlds, vast continents, and countless races. On one world, though, the works of the elven pantheon, the Seldarine, and a nameless creator of humans intruded upon one another. This accidental mixture birthed a being possessed of the incredible beauty and longevity of the elder elves, but with the huger and ambition of humanity. More and less than both races, the thing became known as Kanchelsis, the first vampire, the darkest secret of the Seldarine. From his gore-soaked realm in the Abyss, Kanchelsis endlessly thirsts for blood, and while the lives of mortals sustain him, he ever hungers for richer repasts. He possesses two forms: in his lucid deviousness he is the Rake, an aristocratic elven or half-elven rogue, connoisseur, and sensualist, knowledgeable of countless worlds, art forms, and decadences; in his other form, the Beast, he is a savage force, a rapacious creature concerned only with gore, endlessly flowing rivers of blood, and the end of all things that bleed. Kanchelsis is worshiped throughout the planes by vampires, drow, and all who hunger for power and luxury.

His symbol is a bat with glowing red eyes.

Portfolio: Blood, debauchery, seduction, vampirism.

Domains: Charm, Darkness, Death, Evil.

MELLIFLEUR

Lesser God (Neutral Evil)

Mellifleur was not the first lich, nor one of the greatest mortal wizards to ever live, although he was perhaps the luckiest. An arcanist of considerable might on an unrecorded world, Mellifleur meticulously prepared himself for his transition into lichdom. At the exact moment he preformed his ritual transformation, though, an evil deity of great power sought to elevate one of his most nefarious worshipers to godhood. Somehow, Mellifleur's elaborate arcane workings accidentally captured the rare god magic and channeled it from its intended source to the would-be lich, catapulting the wizard's ascendancy to godhood. Now a god, Mellifleur delights in evil and leading powerful spellcasters down the road to lichdom, yet he also opposes the efforts of a powerful evil deity—whose identity remains unclear—lest his power's rightful owner reclaim the magic that fuels his divinity. Thus, from his realm on Gehenna, the fickle Lich-Lord works plots of unfathomable evil yet occasionally aids the endeavors of servants of good.

Mellifleur's symbol is a crystal vial in a skeletal hand with a ring on its fourth finger.

Portfolio: Lichdom, magic.

Domains: Death, Evil, Luck, Magic.

THE QUEEN OF AIR AND DARKNESS

Intermediate God (Chaotic Evil)

The sinister queen of the Unseelie Court rules from a throne of shadows deep within Pandemonium. Bodiless and broken, she is but a presence of chill darkness and evil emotions that drives her enslaved elven, fey, and fiendish minions to ruin all that the Fey Court works to preserve. Yet, the queen was not always this way. Once a stunning fairy whose beauty rivaled that of the Seelie queen Titania herself, she was corrupted by the ten-faceted *Black Diamond*, a mysterious yet unfathomably powerful artifact of concentrated evil. Since her corruption, she has jealously sought to make the entire fairy race like her: depraved, ugly, and emotionless.

The Queen of Air and Darkness's symbol is a black diamond.

Portfolio: Darkness, magic, murder, evil fey.

Domains: Air, Chaos, Darkness, Trickery.

RAXIVORT

Lesser God (Chaotic Evil)

The feeble god of crawling, lurking, slinking, and base things, Raxivort—the Night Flutterer—is the patron of the goblinlike race known as xvarts (see DRAGON #339). Formerly the demon lord Graz'zt's Master of Slaves, Raxivort controls the teeming hordes of vermin that infest the streets of the Dark Prince's multi-layer Abyssal capitol of Zelatar, primarily the 45th layer known as Fogtown. The petty vermin god recently betrayed his master, though, breaking into Graz'zt's deepest vaults and making off with several of the demon lord's most precious trophies along with unfathomable wealth. This theft infuriated Graz'zt, who ordered Raxivort slain, but the wily xvart-god has gone to ground beneath Fogtown and has proven that he knows these depths even better than the layer's Abyssal master—although some evidence exists that he might have escaped to Pandemonium.

Raxivort's symbol is a blue, flaming hand.

Portfolio: Bats, wererats, rats, xvarts.

Domains: Animal, Chaos, Evil, Trickery.

by Jeremy Walker • illustrated by John Gravato

THE UNIVERSAL KEY

A locked door shouldn't end an adventure, and a locked chest shouldn't be a symbol of frustration. Ideally, the party rogue has come along to deal with such obstacles, but sometimes he's missing, "trying something new" with his skill selection, or dead. In such circumstances, it generally falls to the fighter to resolve the situation with the aid of the "Universal Key." In other words, by pulling out a two-handed weapon, using Power Attack, and smashing the obstacle to smithereens. It's a truism in D&D that few problems exist that Power Attack can't solve—in one way or another—but once in a while the feat alone is not enough.

Some of the alternative keys in this article are more specialized versions of items found in *Arms and Equipment Guide* and *Dungeonscape*.

ALTERNATIVE KEYS

The following additional tools can give you a hand in those circumstances when you don't have a proper rogue.

Acid Injector: This simple device resembles a long funnel (generally made of glass or some other acid-resistant material) with a narrow tube at one end and a large storage container at the other. It delivers a powerful acid to burn through the hinges or locks of chests, safes, and other containers, without wasting acid or damaging the contents of these containers. It takes 2 minutes to use an acid injector to apply acid to a surface. When you use it to bypass a lock, hinge, or other vulnerable point on an object's surface, the precise delivery doubles the damage of the acid used.

Adamantine Bolt Cutter: This resembles an oversized pair of pruning shears with a serrated inner blade. It is specifically designed to cut through metal bars, bolts, and other obstructions with ease, and allows the wielder to attempt to cut through any bar less than 2 inches in diameter with a hardness less than 20. Adamantine bolt cutters deal 20 points of damage plus 1-1/2 times the wielder's Strength modifier per round. Bolt cutters make poor weapons, serving only as clumsy clubs (–2 on attack rolls).

Adamantine Sledge: For the serious basher, this simple sledgehammer is perfectly balanced and crafted from solid adamantine. When you use it to attack a door, wall, container, or other object, it is a 2-handed weapon that deals 1d10 points of damage to the object and ignores any hardness less than 20. Despite its force, however, it is difficult to use as a weapon in combat, and you suffer a –2 penalty on attack rolls with it.

Adamantine Toolkit: This kit contains an adamantine file, an adamantine drill (with bits of varying sizes), and a small

UNIVERSAL KEYS

New Equipment	Cost	Weight
Acid injector	75 gp	2 lb.
Adamantine bolt cutter	250 gp	2 lb.
Adamantine sledge	2,500 gp	15 lb.
Adamantine toolkit	750 gp	5 lb.
Ironbane acid	30 gp	1/4 lb.
Stonebreaker acid	20 gp	1/4 lb.
Woodripper acid	20 gp	1/4 lb.

adamantine hacksaw. It is specifically designed to allow nonprofessionals to bypass locked doors and open locked chests, and the tools are simple and straightforward (if somewhat slow). The drill in this kit allows a character to bore a 1/2-inch-diameter hole in any object 3 inches thick or less and with a hardness less than 20 with a standard action. This is often sufficient to remove the locking mechanism from a door or container. The hacksaw can saw through up to 1 inch of material with hardness less than 20 with a standard action.

Ironbane Acid: This special form of acid affects only iron and other metals weaker than adamantine. One flask of this acid deals 3d10 points of damage to a metal object or creature made entirely of metal (such as an iron golem) and ignores hardness. Ironbane acid has no effect on adamantine or magically reinforced or enchanted metal. You can throw ironbane acid as a grenadelike weapon, in which case it deals full damage to any nonmagical metal armor, weapon, or shield that your target might be wearing or wielding.

Stonebreaker Acid: This special form of acid affects only stone. One flask of this acid deals 3d10 points of damage to a stone object or creature made entirely of stone (such as a stone golem) and ignores hardness. Stonebreaker acid has no effect on magically reinforced or enchanted stone. You can throw stonebreaker acid as a grenadelike weapon, in which case it deals full damage to any nonmagical stone object that your target might be carrying. Stonebreaker acid originally appeared on page 35 of the *Arms and Equipment Guide*.

Woodripper Acid: This special form of acid effects only wood and plant creatures. One flask of this acid deals 3d10 points of acid damage to a wood object or plant creature and ignores hardness. Woodripper acid has no effect on magically reinforced or enchanted wood. You can throw woodripper acid as a grenadelike weapon, in which case it deals full damage to any nonmagical wooden armor, weapon, or shield that your target might be wearing or wielding.

NEW MAGIC ITEM

Some parties who lack a rogue seek more subtle (or at least quieter) ways of bypassing locks.

SKELETON KEY

Price (Item Level): 4,500 (9th)
Body Slot: — (held)
Caster Level: 3rd
Aura: faint; (DC 17) transmutation
Activation: 1 full-round action
Weight: 1 lb.

This unusual object has two distinct parts: a small metal handle and a thin blade about 4 inches long. The blade is made of a shiny blue material whose surface ripples and shifts like the surface of water.

The *skeleton key* is an unusual item commonly found in the possession of doppelgangers and their ilk, who have an affinity with its shapeshifting properties. When inserted into a common door lock, the blade ripples and writhes into the precise shape of the key needed to open the lock, even if the lock is much bigger or much smaller than the blade. Any lock that can be unlocked with a physical key can also be unlocked with a *skeleton key*.

FIND FLAW [GENERAL]

Years of experience in bashing your way through problems has given you an insight into the most efficient way to batter things to pieces. You know just where to hit things in order to destroy them as rapidly as possible.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: Whenever you use the Power Attack feat while attacking an object, you may ignore 1 point of the object's hardness for each point that you subtract from your attack roll. This reduction in hardness stacks with any special ability of the weapon you are using to ignore or reduce hardness (such as from an adamantine weapon).

Special: A fighter may select Find Flaw as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Prerequisites: Craft Wonderous Item, *knock*, creator must have the shapechanger subtype.

Cost to create: 2,250 gp, 180 XP.

EXISTING KEYS

In addition to the items presented here, other tools for breaking and entering exist in such sources as *Arms and Equipment Guide, Complete Adventurer, Complete Scoundrel,* and *Dungeonscape*. The items listed below serve multiple purposes and are not specifically designed to bypass or destroy locks (although in most cases that is how they are used).

Arms and Equipment Guide: Bolt cutters, standard, 6 gp, 5 lb.; glass cutter, 2 gp, 1 lb.; hacksaw, common, 5 gp, 1 lb.; hacksaw, superior, 20 gp, 1 lb.

Complete Adventurer: Lockslip grease, 50 gp, 0 lb. (alchemical item); longspoon thieves' tools, 80 gp, 3 lb.; masterwork longspoon thieves' tools, 150 gp, 3 lb.

Complete Scoundrel: Rust cube, 100 gp, 0 lb. (alchemical item).

Dungeonscape: Hacksaw, adamantine, 600 gp, 1 lb.; hacksaw, common, 5 gp, 1 lb.; hacksaw, superior, 20 gp, 1 lb.; lockslick, 180 gp, 1/2 lb. (alchemical item).

by Monte Cook (a gamer who's really going to miss DRAGON*) • illustrated by James Zhang*

FINALE

Arcane Lore Abilities

The fruits of arcane knowledge come in the form of spells to cast, familiar companions, and the ability to craft magic items. But delving long into the lore of the supernatural, poring over dusty, near-forgotten tomes by candlelight until well into the witching hour and beyond, gives access to even more secrets than just those known to every simple apprentice. The benefits of being truly versed in the arcane arts transform the body and soul of the mage.

While defined as feats, it's important to note that these abilities are different from standard feats, at least in flavor. These should be assumed to be the results of hundreds of hours of research. Their secrets are often unlocked by accident, while looking for an entirely different secret in some book of ancient lore, or making the tiniest of errors while practicing a newly discovered spell. Mages learn of them in the whispers of bound demons or the songs of caged angels.

Arcane lore abilities manifest as the result of the intricacies of magic. Their very existence suggests wellsprings of eldritch knowledge and capabilities as yet untapped. Despite all the well-known spells and abilities carefully cataloged and classified by mages everywhere, there still remains a mystery and a majesty of magic—no matter how much is defined, there will always be more than mortals know of its power.

All of these feats grant supernatural abilities. They cannot be dispelled, but they are suppressed in an *antimagic field*.

COUNTENANCE OF THE MAGE

You use ancient magical secrets to control your appearance.

Prerequisites: Int 13, Cha 11, arcane caster level 9th.

Benefit: You can alter your appearance in subtle ways. First and foremost, you can rid yourself of dust, dirt, sweat, and grime using a full round of concentration whenever you wish. Likewise, you can dry yourself, style (and color) your hair, shave or trim (or color) your facial or body hair. These are all also full-round actions.

If desired, you can adopt a single cosmetic affectation, such as curiously shaped or colored eyes, hair that waves in an otherwise unfelt breeze, a strangely-shaped shadow, and so forth. This affectation is permanent once chosen, cannot be changed, and has no game effect.

Lastly, you can designate a single non-magical container no larger than 3 feet by 3 feet by 3 feet, into which you must place nothing but nonmagical apparel or jewelry. By concentrating for a round, you can conjure any article in the container and have it appear on your body, instantly wearing it. If you so desire, the clothing you wear in that same position can be transferred back to the container at the same time. Thus, you can change

your clothing and your jewelry when you wish. You can conjure a warm cloak for a chill evening, or simply dress appropriately for dinner at a moment's notice. In no way does this enable you to conjure weapons or gear.

EARS OF THE MAGE

You use arcane lore to enhance your hearing to a supernatural degree.

Prerequisites: Int 13, arcane caster level 14th.

Benefit: You designate one specific, proper name. Thereafter, if anyone within a radius of 10 miles per your arcane spellcaster level speaks that name, you hear it and instantaneously know the direction of, distance to, and name of the speaker. No concentration or action is required to gain this knowledge. Incoming information does not distract or hinder you, although the DM is free to adjudicate that if a great many people speak the name at once, the incoming information is lost, so wise mages choose uncommon names. Most choose their own name.

You may choose a new name as a standard action once per year, but only one name can be designated at a time.

EYES OF THE MAGE

You master rare mysteries to enhance your vision.

Prerequisites: Int 13, arcane caster level 12th.

Benefit: Your eyes glow with a supernatural sheen, granting you darkvision and low-light vision. If you already have darkvision due to your race, the range of the darkvision is increased by 60 feet.

Further, your eyesight becomes absolutely perfect. You gain a +1 bonus on Search checks and a +1 insight bonus on all ranged attacks due to a particular keenness of vision.

FOOTSTEPS OF THE MAGE

Using obscure arcane lore, you gain the ability to glide mysteriously along the ground.

Prerequisites: Int 13, arcane caster level 12th.

Benefit: You can move without actually taking steps. Instead, your feet glide along the ground. You move at your normal speed. Not only does this provide a surprising visual effect, this allows you to move as long as your feet touch the ground, even if they are bound. Further, you gain a +2 bonus on Balance checks and a +4 bonus on Reflex saves made to avoid falling (such as into a pit) or traps triggered by stepping onto the floor.

HANDS OF THE MAGE

You develop a supernatural affinity between your hands and a specific object using the nearly forgotten teachings of a far-off time or place.

Prerequisites: Int 13, arcane caster level 14th.

Benefit: You can designate one object that you own and can lift on your own without magical aid. The object must have been in your possession for at least a week and a day. Once designated, you can have the item fly to your hand(s) via telekinesis as long as you can see it and have line of effect to it. The item travels to you in 1 round, avoiding obstacles, regardless of distance. This is a free action.

Further, the item can be conjured to appear instantaneously in your hand from any distance once per week. This requires a full round of concentration.

You may designate a new object only if the previous item is destroyed. Otherwise, your choice is permanent and cannot be changed. The new object must meet all the same requirements of this feat as the previous item.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time you do, you must choose a different item.

NAME OF THE MAGE

By plumbing the depths of eldritch knowledge, you have discovered dire secrets no mortal was ever meant to know.

Prerequisites: Arcane caster level 20th.

Benefit: Anyone other than you who speaks your name becomes greatly unnerved, as are all who hear it (other than you). If the creature who speaks your name has as many or more Hit Dice as you, he is shaken for 3 rounds (no save); if he has fewer Hit Dice than you, he is frightened for 1d4+1 rounds (no save). Creatures who hear your name must make a Will save (DC 10 + your arcane spellcasting level + your Cha bonus) or become frightened for 3 rounds. Even those who succeed on the saving throw are shaken for 1 round. Neither your presence nor knowledge of you has any effect on this ability. Your name itself has gained an inherent power all its own.

This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

PRESENCE OF THE MAGE

Your delving into secrets unknown to mortals has forever changed you on an intangible level.

Prerequisites: Int 11, Cha 17, arcane caster level 18th.

Benefit: Allies within 25 feet of you are heartened and gain a +1 morale bonus on saving throws and attack rolls.

Non-allied creatures within 25 feet of you are slightly unnerved and suffer a –1 penalty on saving throws and attack rolls.

Further, natural animals shy away from you, becoming uneasy within 25 feet. Any attempt by you or your allies to influence an animal using a Charisma-based skill or ability (such as Handle Animal or wild empathy) within this area suffers a –1 penalty. Ride checks made within the area suffer a –2 penalty.

The latter two effects are mind-affecting fear effects.

VOICE OF THE MAGE

Prerequisites: Int 13, arcane caster level 16th.

Benefit: You can alter and modulate your voice to give you a host of different vocal effects, making you sound terrifying or alien. You gain a +1 bonus on Disguise, Intimidate, and Perform checks made when using your voice.

In addition, you can speak in a normal tone, or even a whisper, to creatures within 1 mile). You may choose to cause specific listeners (rather than all within shouting distance) to hear your voice, but you must be aware of their presence and general location. No line of sight or line of effect is needed, however.

Nodwick

by Aaron Williams
www.nodwick.com

For every vengeance there is an equal and opposite revengeance.

WE TOOK OUT THE GOBLIN ARCHDUKE, AND WE STOPPED THE DROWFS* FROM TAKING OVER THE UNDERDARK.
CHECK.
THEN WE STOPPED THOSE WHATSITS FROM THAT OTHER DIMENSION FROM POLLUTING THE OCEANS WITH... WHAT WERE THEY AGAIN?
SOMETHING CALLED AYE-OH-ELL SEE-DEES.
AND WE'RE STILL KNOWN FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO SAVE OUR OWN HOME TOWN?
SO DOING GOOD FOR GOODNESS' SAKE ISN'T ENOUGH?
* HALF DROW, HALF DWARF. TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.
THAT'S WHAT I--
WE'VE JUST BEEN KILLING STUFF WE HEAR ABOUT FROM TAVERN RUMORS. NOBODY COMES TO HIRE THE "LOSER BRIGADE." WE MIGHT AS WELL HANG IT UP.
HA-HAAA! AT LAST!
WE'VE FINALLY DONE IT, MY FRIENDS. OUR ANCIENT ENEMIES HAVE BEEN BROKEN!
THAT'S OUR REVENGE? I CAME ALL THE WAY FROM THE TOMB OF HORRORS FOR THIS?
TRY EXITING RAVENLOFT SOMETIME. IT'S WORSE THAN GETTING OUT OF JURY DUTY.
I'M GOING BACK TO THE ABYSS.
MIND IF I HITCH A RIDE? I'M NOT INTO MY MUSHROOM FORM ANYMORE, SO I WON'T MOLD UP YOUR UPHOLSTERY.
WAIT! DON'T YOU SEE? THIS IS THE WORST THING WE COULD DO TO THEM! THEIR SPIRITS ARE CRUSHED! THEIR LIVES ARE MEANINGLESS!
FROM QUEEN ASTARTE TO PAYING OFF THE NOBLES TO IGNORE THEM, WE--
K-CRASSH!
WE PICKED UP YOUR SCRYING A FEW DAYS AGO. I HOPE YOU LIKED THE PHANTASMAL HOME MOVIE YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING.
THESE GUYS ARE BEHIND US NOT GETTING OUR REP BACK?
I FOLLOWED THEIR ICKY-POO "RESIDUE OF NAUGHTINESS" FROM THAT RUDE GRAFFITI ABOUT US IN THE ADVENTURER'S GUILD BATHROOM.
AND IT'S THAT GYGAX GUY! HOW'S IT GOIN'?
MY ADVENTURE SCENARIOS WILL BE AVENGED... SOMEDAY!
YOU HIRED THESE PEOPLE. BLAME YOUR INHUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT.
FOR THE RECORD, I WAS RECRUITED BY TRACY AND LAURA HICKMAN.
WEREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO SAT ON ME FOR TWO MONTHS?
UH... KINDA. I THINK IT'S SAFE TO SAY WE BOTH SUFFERED A LOT...

SO LONG, AND THANKS FOR ALL THE FISH!

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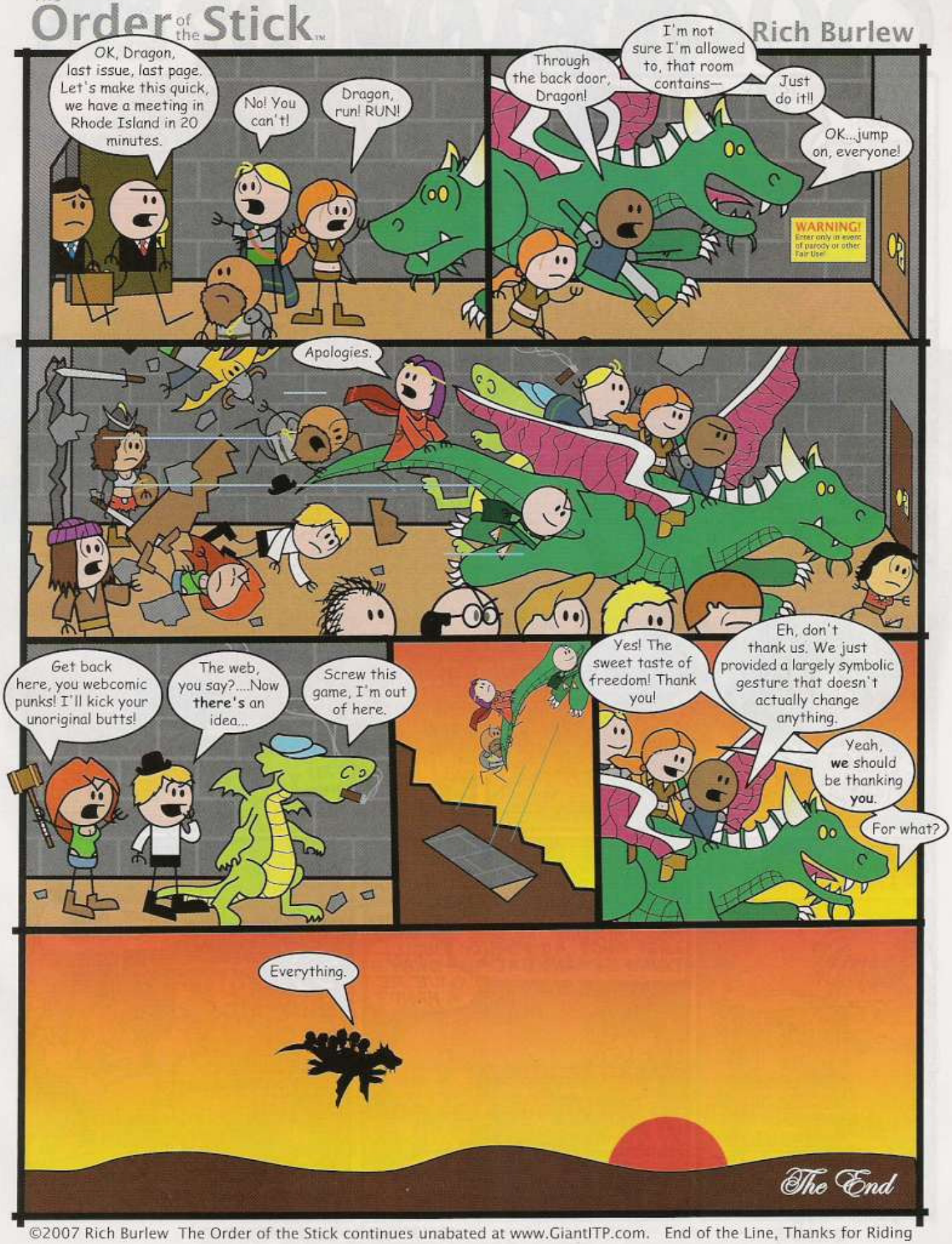
LOOK, THOUGH! ALL-NEW DORK TOWERS AT...

The Order of the Stick™

Rich Burlew


OK, Dragon, last issue, last page. Let's make this quick, we have a meeting in Rhode Island in 20 minutes.
No! You can't!
Dragon, run! RUN!
Through the back door, Dragon!
I'm not sure I'm allowed to, that room contains—
Just do it!!
OK...jump on, everyone!
WARNING! Enter only in event of parody or other Fair Use!
Apologies.
Get back here, you webcomic punks! I'll kick your unoriginal butts!
The web, you say?....Now there's an idea...
Screw this game, I'm out of here.
Yes! The sweet taste of freedom! Thank you!
Eh, don't thank us. We just provided a largely symbolic gesture that doesn't actually change anything.
Yeah, we should be thanking you.
For what?
Everything.
The End

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WHAT'S NEW? WITH PHIL & DIXIE!

HASTA LA VISTA, AMIGOS!
TODAY WE'RE TALKING ABOUT ENDINGS!
©PFoglio 07
STORIES ARE DIFFERENT FROM REAL LIFE BECAUSE, IN A STORY, YOU CAN PICK A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS WITH A MAXIMUM OF EXCITEMENT, PATHOS, AND SO ON – AND AT A CERTAIN POINT, DECLARE "THE END" WITHOUT HAVING TO DEAL WITH THE LESS THAN GLAMOROUS AFTERMATH.
MORDOR SUPERFUND CLEAN-UP SITE #16,789
DEATH HAS ALWAYS BEEN A POPULAR ENDING, IF ONLY BECAUSE IT'S SO FINAL... AS LONG AS YOU'RE NOT TELLING A STORY ABOUT GHOSTS, VAMPIRES, LICHES, ZOMBIES, GODS, DEMONS, REVIVIFICATION OR SUPER-HEROES.
FOOLS! YOU CANNOT KILL ME! I AM PROTECTED BY A FORCE TOO POWERFUL TO RESIST – A SUCCESSFUL TOY LINE!!
NOW! WITH GLOW IN THE DARK "DEATH GRIP" ACTION!
MOST PEOPLE PREFER HAPPY ENDINGS –
OKAY – FINE! YOU ARE DECLARED RULER OF THE EARTH! WEALTH, FAME AND GLORY ARE YOURS! YOUR ENEMIES FALL AT YOUR FEET AND YOUR REIGN LASTS A THOUSAND YEARS! HAPPY?!
AND YOU SAID I SHOULD CHUCK THE RING INTO THE VOLCANO.
SHUT UP.
P.S. 238 Alumni
WHILE SOME STORYTELLERS NEVER DO GET AROUND TO ENDING THINGS.
VOLUME 14 OF THE AWARD WINNING "BEEZEWOG'S CLAMSHACK" TRILOGY!
NO, REALLY, HERE WE GO
AND SOMETIMES THE MOST SATISFYING ENDING IS ACHIEVED BY SIMPLY GIVING THE READERS WHAT THEY WANT:
AND THIS WILL BE OUR LAST SHOT AT FINALLY DOING SEX AND D&D!
WELL... OKAY. GIVE ME A HAND?
JUST AS LONG AS YOU AVOID THAT ALL TIME WORST CLICHE ENDING...
CLIK!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
THANK YOU – AND GOOD NIGHT!